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# LETTERS

TO THE

# SOUTHERN PEOPLE

CONCERNING

THE ACTS OF CONGRESS

AND

THE TREATIES WITH GREAT BRITAIN,

IN RELATION TO THE

AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE.

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## PREFACE.

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The following letters were originally published in the "States" newspaper at Washington. They are now respectfully submitted to the Southern Public in their present form at the request of several who have read them with entire coincidence of sentiment. They have no pretension to elaborateness nor even fulness on the points upon which they bear, but if enough has been said to invite unbiased reflection on the part of his Southern fellow-citizens, the Author is content.





# LETTERS TO THE SOUTHERN PEOPLE.

FROM A FELLOW COUNTRYMAN.

No. 1.

"The manifestoes of Exeter Hall must for once be defensive and apologetic; for the world is now wiser than when pulpit and platform resounded with indignant appeals to humanity, five and twenty years ago."—*London Times*. "If our (*British*) neighbors choose to submit to the consequences of their abolition theories, the rest of the world is not obliged to adopt them as its rule of conduct. Their code of philanthropy is not a law for us."—*Paris Constitutionnel*.

Never, perhaps, since the birth of the Republic, have we, fellow-Southerners, been more united. This should serve to cement our efforts in the great struggle to which events are hurrying us on. Let us then throw minor differences out of view, and reason calmly together upon pressing dangers and wants of prime consequence. Most of the purely party questions of the Federal Union have passed, and the one inherent sectional difficulty of the compact must eventually stalk forth in the grim reality of its huge proportions. The days of the old "Federalists" and "Republicans" are gone and their statesmen repose in forgotten graves.

It is so with the Madisonian "era of good feeling." Even Democracy and Whiggery are over; at least *we* are no longer divided by these obsolete party lines. The questions of embargo and non-intercourse, of the tariff and internal improvements, of a national bank and a sub-treasury, are consigned to oblivion and will know no resurrection. But *we* in our day and generation have a much graver ordeal to pass through. It behooves us then to "put on athletic habits for the contest," to marshal our forces for the gathering storm, and to silence the voice of internal rivalry, in preparation for the day which shall witness a regenerate, united and disenthralled South.

To do this, our opinions should be confirmed, definite, and settled, as to the real grounds upon which our system of slavery—the institution we must *all* battle for—rests. As yet, the struggle is essentially one of opinion; but, unfortunately, we have all, to a greater or less degree, been reared under the influences of a very mistaken sentiment, and time is required to shake off the burden of error. This necessary work, however, is gradually progressing. The Southern mind has, in thirty years divested itself of many

cardinal errors of the negro mania, and this timely deliverance has strengthened slavery beyond calculation. Let the work continue. It does go bravely on. Indeed it cannot be checked.

Yet though these errors have been exploded, their *effects*, through the laws enacted during their existence still remain. It is for us to remove them. Nor must it be supposed that, because some of the legislation of our fathers is considered *erroneous*, any idea of reproach is entertained; neither is the unguided spirit of innovation at work. That trait which charms with veneration the acts of our ancestry, is one of the noblest of our nature; nevertheless, to discover and avoid their errors is an imperative duty of our reasoning faculties. Wherein else consists the value of experience? If mankind had not been endowed with the capacity to perceive and the prudence to avoid the errors of their forefathers, civilization had never progressed. Call to mind a few incidents in our own brief history.

Among the most "illustrious Southerners" of the revolutionary epoch were WASHINGTON, JEFFERSON, and MADISON. It is frequently said that, since *they* lived and died slaveholders, nothing they did, nor no measure they advocated, could have been otherwise than beneficial to slavery, still less hurtful to it. Put this to the test of fifty years' experience. WASHINGTON is universally acknowledged to have been both good and great. But suppose the last act of his life had been an example generally followed in this country; who can estimate the deplorable consequences? His last will and testament emancipated all his slaves. Suppose every slaveholder in the country had done the same; what would be the present condition of the South? *Post obit* emancipations are now regarded "death-bed follies;" just complaints are rising against the custom; many States forbid it; yet the "Father of his country" set the obnoxious example!

JEFFERSON, also, the "Apostle of Liberty," the great leader who checked the growth of consolidation, and gave life and shape to the principles of State-rights and other political doctrines to which we all cling, was the originator of the proposition that "no more slave States should be admitted into the Union." It was, I think, in 1781, that he reported to the Continental Congress a plan of Territorial government, which prohibited slavery in the Territories after the year 1800. It was defeated by a single vote. But Mr. DANE, of Massachusetts, took up the idea six years after, and grafted it on the ordinance of 1787.

MADISON, too, whom we all love to honor, and whose memory we revere, besides his active opposition to the use of even the word slave in the Constitution, suggested, in 1790, as an object well worthy of consideration, whether preventive regulations might not be made in relation to the introduction of slaves into the new States to be formed out of the Western territory; thus standing sponsor for Mr. JEFFERSON's idea of preventing the formation of new slave States—of all others the most repugnant to the wishes and welfare of the South now.



If such men as these were liable to pursue a policy inimical to the vital interests of the South, it is but reasonable to expect that the "lesser lights" of even the galaxy of that day should be equally fallible. Such, in fact, was the case. From Massachusetts to Georgia slavery was generally regarded "a reproach," "a blight," "a blot on the country," "a political, moral and social evil." The result was a general tone of apology for its continuance; a vague expectation of its ultimate abolition; its immediate termination in some of the States; its exclusion from the Territories; and an effort to prevent its growth by prohibiting a further importation of slaves from abroad. The whole Union was drifting down the stream of Abolition, until profits began to neutralize philanthropy; the economist confronted the moralist, and the strange delusion was dispersed before the penetrating rays of truth and reason. By this timely interruption, however, the course of events was only diverted to what has now become a beaten track. A systematic course of legislation, growing out of this Abolition sentiment, has placed the South in a false position in the Union, and, what is more to be lamented, has, to no little extent, familiarized Southern men with a tone of arrogant defiance on the part of their Northern enemies, which their better impulses would not otherwise brook and upon which the calculating politicians of the hireling States would not otherwise dare to venture. From this fact, if from no other, we receive a solemn admonition to beware of this beaten track, now lying stretched out before us. We see where it leads to; let us abandon it. It is time we should take a new departure, and, in our journey through the wilderness, we should watch with care the variations of our compass, and note well the errors which have set false landmarks to our course.

In venerating the memory of a past generation, let us avoid a blind subserviency to its prejudices and its fallacies. In lavishing praise upon the illustrious names of history, let us be mindful to profit by the lessons they teach. The history of every nation reveals this truth:—Posterity must learn, as well from the errors as the maxims and precepts of the statesmen and warriors who have added lustre to its pages. It is so with the unfinished page of American history. The very first line graven upon it is a preposterous fallacy—"all men are created equal!" Every act of our lives, every law of the land, and every mature reflection of the human mind, is a contradiction to this; let us, therefore, fellow Southerners and slave-holders, correct the record in every particular we can, by rising superior to that calculating fraternity with whom, so far, we are united under the bonds of a political compact, by making good at all hazards our mastery over that inferior race with whom we are so profitably and so peculiarly connected, by mounting up to the grandeur of our exalted mission, and thereby establishing upon *this* continent, and in the face of the wide world, *our* institution as palpably and as unmistakably as the city which sits upon a hill and cannot be hid.

## No. 2.

"The battle of the negro will have to be fought by the philanthropists with a great diminution of prestige, the result of falsified predictions and blasted hopes. The Broughams and Wilberforces of the present day will have to adopt a somewhat humbled tone."—*London Times*.

"It is the business of Great Britain to bring these fanatical Abolitionists to reason. The consequences of their false doctrines have affected us. Our colonies have suffered from lack of hands, as well as the English colonies, and it cannot be any longer endured."—*Paris Constitutionnel*.

Having in the preceding letter congratulated you upon your prevailing unanimity of sentiment, and invoking now a continuance of harmony, it is but natural to inquire whether, in the existing critical position of federal politics, your correspondent has any measure to propose, for the consummation of which all the Southern States are likely to unite. The answer is negative. But while the *Government* is disposing of the Kansas question, of the Central American and the Nicaraguan question, and others in its charge, it is but proper that *the people, at their firesides*, should contemplate subjects of grave importance, though as yet not involving either parties or politicians. To some of these let me invite your calm and dispassionate attention, in the simple way of social discussion, and not in a spirit of political controversy; premising, at the outset, that in a community of States embracing so vast a territory, and yielding such a variety of produce as ours, it would be unreasonable not to expect some apparent conflict of interest and opinion; but that this diversity relates in point of fact to matters of secondary importance, and can, with a little mutual concession—so becoming in our case—be surely obviated.

Among the several questions which now engage the attention of Southern men, and, in fact, of the commercial world, is that relating to a competent supply of labor in our cotton, rice, tobacco, sugar, and other fields, or, as it has got to be called, the question of the slave-trade. To some, perhaps, in the retirement of home, and unaware of actual facts, this topic may seem startling. To others, in public life, it may be *annoying*. Why should it be? It is two hundred and fifty years old. The Abolition side of it has been thoroughly discussed; may it not be time, is it not full time, that the slavery side of it, *our side* of it, should be understood? As far back as the year 1788, one of the sternest patriots of one of the staunchest Southern States, in open defiance of the Abolition influences of his day, took his unalterable position on the *slavery* side of this question. RAWLINS LOWNDES, of South Carolina, than whom no American was more respected for all the virtues of a patriot and statesman, asked: "What cause was there for jealousy of our importing negroes? Why confine us to twenty years, or rather, *why limit us at all?* For his part, he thought this trade could be justified on the principles of religion, humanity and justice; for certainly to translate a set of human beings from

a bad country to a better, was fulfilling every part of those principles. \* \* \* Without negroes, this State would degenerate into one of the most contemptible in the Union, and whilst there remained one acre of swamp land in Carolina, he would raise his voice against restricting the importation of negroes." Let us then, with the experience of three quarters of a century, and as the people most interested, deliberate upon it, not as advocates, as pleaders, nor as partizans, but as *we are*, honest men searching for truth, that it might prevail.

Some of the Southern papers and periodicals have *already* suggested the investigation. The New Orleans Delta, the Charleston Standard, and others, were early and zealous in the field. Among the rest the Charleston Mercury, in the fall of 1854, asked: "*Is it not time to look at this matter as involving questions which, stretching beyond the narrow vision of dreamers, demand for their solution calm inquiry and sober discussion?*" Does not the slave-trade, in supplying to many flourishing States the labor needful to their development, in abundantly furnishing to the world the most useful products of human labor, in bringing the savage within the pale of civilization and Christianity; and lastly, by still progressing in its work, in defiance of all attempts at its suppression, rightfully claim for itself an origin higher than mere avarice, and a recognition at the hands of *Government* other than is accorded to the buccaneer and pirate? We desire to see this question taken out of the hands of empty-headed fanatics, who have all along usurped its control," &c.

The effort has been made, *and is and will be persisted in*, to take this question "out of the hands of empty-headed fanatics," and to solve it, in the fullness of time, by means of "calm inquiry and sober discussion." But it is to be regretted, that as soon as this desired inquiry and discussion is begun, by those at least not considered "empty-headed fanatics," the same journal should find it necessary, in June, 1857, to ask, "*Why agitate it?*" and to answer its question of 1854, "is it not *time* to look at this matter," &c., by saying: "When the re-opening of the African slave-trade is a practical measure, by a dissolution of the present Union, it will be *time enough* to consider the policy of renewing it. When *that time* comes *we* will be prepared freely to discuss it; but until then *we* submit with great deference, that it appears to us *silence is our better policy.*"

Such inconsistencies as these, however, cannot control, nor even deflect the current of events. Calm inquiry and sober discussion *have* commenced, and silence, among the people of the Southern States, on this subject, whether in or out of the Union, is now impossible. Slavery and the slave-trade are *indissoluble* in the minds of thinking men all the world over. In the words of the distinguished ROBERT HALL, "they are integral parts of the same system—one is not more defensible than the other—*we have both* to defend; and the London Times is eminently right in saying: "*It requires no great foresight to perceive that a great contest is*



*approaching on the subject of slavery and the slave-trade."* IN THIS CONTEST OUR DESTINY WILL BE THE STAKE. Did ever a people have more at venture? Should we then—can we—will we be silent?

The essence of all dispute relating to slavery and the slave-trade, in their moral aspect at least, is a radical difference of opinion as to the *right* of man to hold property in man. It all comes down to this. And without discussing this question of right, which has long been settled in our minds, let us understand what is meant by holding property in man.

This has different meanings in different countries and under different laws. In some parts of Africa, for example, property in man means literally "property in human flesh," so harped on by Abolitionists. The master is a cannibal, and holds his slaves under cannibal laws. In other quarters, though cannibalism does not prevail, the power of life and death obtains, as in many of the ancient nations. Even in modern Europe the remains of a former system of bondage are wide spread and striking, as is well illustrated among other works in the recent publication of M. F. LE PLAY. (*Les Ouvriers Européens Imprimé par l'Autorisation de l'Empereur.*) In some quarters the "operatives" are mocked with the name of liberty only that they may be rendered more thoroughly the bondmen of capital. Elsewhere, the "property" is hereditary and happy, while, again, the self-imposed condition of the workman's existence is to pass his days in the service of a master. The labor of his whole life is absolutely mortgaged in payment for the money bestowed upon him in youth, and old age overtakes him before the debt is cancelled. And in the densely populated districts, where the hireling system is in perfection, labor is irretrievably within the power, and in that sense the property of, the most grinding capital. It dies out from sheer destitution, or best exists in a state of chronic starvation. So true is this, that in many parts of Europe, it has been reluctantly conceded, the felon in his cell enjoys substantial comforts which cannot be honestly earned by thousands upon thousands of the hirelings out of doors.

Different from all these is our system of labor, *our* property in man. With us this property does not consist in human "flesh," but in human *labor*. Our property in man is a right and title to human labor. And where is it that this right and title does not exist on the part of those who have the money to buy it? The only difference in any two cases is in the tenure. Labor and land are the two sources of all wealth, the one active, the other passive. Capital, therefore, will always be invested in labor, the *active* source. And the nature of the laws, both moral and municipal, which control such investment, must always be determined by a combination of causes peculiar to each country and people. Our slave property lies only incidentally in the person of the slave, but essentially in his labor. Who buys a slave, except he has work for him? His person is held as the only sure means of obtaining his labor. The proprietorship of his person extends only

so far as the derivation of a fair amount of labor. The value of the slave is determined by the sort and amount of labor he is capable of, and it is according to these that he is bought and sold; and it is undeniable that these are the same conditions which determine the hireling's wages. In fact, we own our slaves for their labor. We govern them as men. We reward and punish them as moral agents, and are fully aware of and quite reconciled to our obligations in the premises. Abolitionists call our slaves chattels; let them have it so. If labor is a chattel, we prefer the African article; they are free to make their own selection.

With this understanding of what we mean by "property in man," and assuming our *right* to hold such property, it is needless to show that it must be liable to all the incidents common to property in general, prominent among which is a change of owners—*sale* and *purchase*. Yet in some of our treaties, and throughout our legislation, the sale and purchase of slaves is denounced as criminal. The vocabulary is exhausted of its approbrious epithets. And the same authority which professes to protect the *property* denounces its sale and purchase. Look at the record of the last half century. There you find act upon act, resolution upon resolution, treaty upon treaty, all denouncing as nefarious, inhuman, unjust, and piratical, this acknowledged contingency of slave property, and even invoking the execration of mankind upon those who transfer it. Is this consistent? What is property, if it cannot be bought and sold? And if slave property cannot be bought and sold, except in the teeth of the most unmeasured governmental reprobation, and at the risk of a pirate's doom, is such property upon a footing of equality with all other property, the traffic in which is exempt from that reprobation and risk? If the importation of one description of property is taxed 30 per cent., the tax is denounced as a *protective* tax. What would we say if the importation were prohibited altogether? Labor, we know, is bought and sold everywhere. Every capitalist in America buys it daily. If, then, slave labor cannot be imported, is not the prohibition worse than a protective tax for the benefit of hireling labor, the only other kind which can be imported?

Upon what, then, do these laws rest? Why is the importation of slaves, unlike all other property, *prohibited*? The recorded answer is: "*The traffic in slaves, is irreconcilable with the principles of humanity and justice.*" Do we, fellow-Southerners, subscribe to this doctrine? Which one of our State Legislatures will prohibit "the traffic in slaves," within its jurisdiction, upon the ground that it is inhuman and unjust? The opinions of the entire Southern population in relation to slavery and all its adjuncts have changed, and are changing. Let them find utterance. Ours is a *government of opinion*. And our liberties are in danger, if we, "the people," are not prepared, able, and determined to carry out our convictions to their legitimate results.

## No. 3.

"But politicians and the public, and even the friends of the slaves themselves, have now begun to see matters in a clearer light. Our own colonies are impoverished, but the sum of slavery is not diminished; it has only been transferred from us to more grasping, pitiless, and unscrupulous hands."—*London Times*.

"Are not these reasons sufficient to induce us to look to Africa for laborers for our own colonies? Our planters, authorized by a Government careful of their interests, have turned their attention to that quarter. African emigration has commenced; it is pursued with energy, and we hope it will continue until our colonies revive."—*Paris Constitutionnel*.

No general custom can be "irreconcilable with the principles of humanity and justice," which has lawfully existed in all ages, and has received the sanction of the Creator, Governor, and Judge of mankind. "Of the heathen that are round about you" shall ye "buy bondmen and bondmaids." "They shall be your bondmen forever"—is a divine injunction, which has indeed been discovered to be piratical by the new lights of the nineteenth century, but which no believer in God, be he Jew or Gentile, should regard as irreconcilable either with the principles of humanity or justice. Certainly none in the South so consider it.

It is quite true that in one of the churches it was once forbidden to buy or sell slaves; but *that*, like many other regulations, both of church and state, was the creature of a diseased sentiment long since extinct, and is now not only obsolete, but rapidly becoming erased from the discipline of the church South. It is to be hoped the municipal laws of like absurdity may share the same fate. The truth is, no Southerner man, having the plainest understanding, believes that the sale and purchase of slaves is wrong. This general proposition, then, which is the foundation of all moral opposition to the importation of slaves, being universally repudiated at the South as false, specious, and contrary to the right of property in slaves, which is recognized and protected by the Constitution and laws of the United States; let us see if any particular system of traffic in which we are interested is obnoxious to the grave charge of injustice, inhumanity, and piracy.

The only two systems of slave-trade in which we are immediately concerned are the American and the African, the one confined to the Southern States, the other formerly, and soon again to be, conducted between some of them and Africa. It is to be presumed that none of us are prepared to denounce the *American slave-trade*. Compare it with the African. Take the case of a Virginian and an African slave, each purchased for a cotton-field in Texas. The Virginian slave is born and reared in a Christian land. The influences of a refined civilization are reflected so powerfully upon him that he is elevated, in point of morality, religion, intelligence, usefulness, and physical comfort, above a moiety of mankind, and infinitely above forty millions of his race in Africa.

The difference in these respects is so immeasurable that there



must be a marked difference in their perceptions, affections, and attachments. While, then, the Virginian slave is plying his frugal hoe on the banks of the Rappahannock or the Roanoke, let us turn to the African coast. The African slave is born in a land of heathen idolatry, so gross and accursed that not a single ray of Christianity has yet dispersed the darkness of its superstition. Reared under the influences of a deplorable barbarity which the imagination fails to conceive; inured to the most abject slavery it has ever been the lot of man to witness; without a single domestic association, and esteeming none of the relations of life; he lives without developing a single virtue, while reveling in all the vices known to his savage condition; useless to the world until he is tamed and *compelled* to labor under a superior race in a foreign land. Such is their relative condition in the land of their nativity, let them be compared at the time they are to change masters. What relations in life is it, the severance of which is more "irreconcilable with the principles of humanity and justice," in the case of the African than in that of the Virginian slave?

Is it the marriage tie? We are told by every traveler that *marriage* is almost unknown to the African slave, and a sense of connubial obligation forms no part of his moral code; while so well is the relation appreciated and observed by the Virginian slave, that his marital vows are frequently sealed under the sanctions of the Christian Church. It would seem, then, that if it is "irreconcilable with the principles of humanity and justice" to separate the African savage from his score of heathen courtesans, and put him to work in the cotton fields of Texas, where he can be made useful to himself and to mankind by assisting to "replenish the earth;" it must be more irreconcilable with those principles to separate the civilized Virginian slave from the wife with whom he is united in the bond of Christian wedlock.

But if it is not the rupture of this tie alone which starts the tear of philanthropy over the "horrors" of the African trade, and summons from the wild recesses of every Ethiopian jungle the raw head and bloody bones of "monsters," "buccaneers," and "pirates," to affright the astonished world, it may be the separation of parent from child, or brother from brother. Yet nothing is more common in some parts of Africa than the parent selling his own child, and the brother betraying his own blood. If, then, it is irreconcilable with these principles to buy an African bondman away from his parent, who like the other "heathens round about" is ready to trade with the first comer, it must be more irreconcilable with them to separate the son of a Virginian slave from parents whose chief pleasure it is to call him their own, and whose greatest sorrow is over the fate that takes him away.

Or is it the love of friends, of home, and of country, which, being blasted by this trade, attunes the voice of philanthropy to the notes of horror, execration and bloodthirst? Grant the African as full a measure of these good qualities as the craziest Abolitionist may claim for him, has not the American slave as much? What-

ever may be the longing of the one for the places and companions of his early barbarism, or for the altars of his *fetische*, is there no lingering sigh to be heaved by the Virginian slave, over the old homestead—aye, even over the grassy turf that covers his kind old master's manes, far away in the Old Dominion? Has *he* no tear to dedicate to the soil of his birth, when memory transports him to his early associations? If, then, it is irreconcilable with these principles to transfer the African savage from his heathen home, and place him in a sphere of usefulness in a Christian land, it must be more irreconcilable with them to remove, to the wild regions of Texas, the civilized and thrifty Virginian slave from his pleasant home in the fruitful and healthy valley of the Rappahannock.

This comparison, it may be said, cannot fairly be drawn, for the reason that the American trade is in active existence, while the African is not; and that there is no parallel between opening a traffic and continuing one already established. There may be a difference, but, if any, it consists merely in the fact of beginning and the fact of continuing. There can be no moral difference. If it is wrong to begin, it is wrong to continue. If it is wrong to buy one slave, it is wrong to buy another. The same law which may be claimed to make *one* sin, must make the *other* sin. There cannot be one code to suit this time and place, and one to suit that; nor one for this occasion, and another for that. Nor should the trying vicissitudes of human existence, to which allusion has been made, be allowed to disturb our equanimity. They are not peculiar to the slave! "Thus, O CRÆSUS, is man completely the sport of vicissitude!" was the admonition which SOLOX found it necessary to address to his royal auditor. And modern poets have sung the tribulations and laments of the European emigrant—

"Impell'd, with steps unceasing, to pursue  
Some fleeting good, that mocks him with the view."

\* \* \* \* \*  
———"What sorrows gloomed that parting day,  
That called him from his native walks away?"

But it is unnecessary to dwell any further upon this point. There cannot be many Southern men of intelligence who seriously oppose the importation of African slaves upon moral grounds, or indeed upon any others than those of expediency; before proceeding to the consideration of which, however, something is to be said about our "responsibility" for the existence of African slavery in our midst; a point of no little importance, upon which our memory should be refreshed, but which must be the subject of another letter. Are we responsible for the existence, perpetuation, prosperity and extension of African slavery in America? We are.

## No. 4.

"The existence of slavery is an economical question, and, so long as the system is profitable, we cannot doubt that it will be maintained."—*London Times*.

"In the tropics no European can venture to cultivate the soil. To him it yields but deadly emanations, while its richest products repay the labor of the African."—*Paris Constitutionnel*.

It is a startling truth, that the general hostility to Southern civilization has been unwittingly encouraged by the inconsistencies and inconsiderateness of our course with respect to the slave trade. In our legislation we have vainly attempted to discriminate between this trade and slavery itself, out of which it springs. A fatal error!

Abolitionists, on the contrary, plainly seeing their indivisibility, have always coupled them together. The two are indissoluble in point of defensibility. Never did men speak with more sincerity and truth than PITT, FOX, WILBERFORCE, and BURKE, when they said, respectively: "You must, in the very first instance, stop your importations, if you hope to introduce any rational or practicable plan, either for gradual emancipation or present general improvement."—"If the plantations could not be cultivated without it, (the slave trade,) upon the principles of humanity and justice, they ought not to be carried on at all. Better be without the islands, than not abolish the slave trade."—"I will gradually produce the abolition of slavery, by immediately abolishing the slave trade; and I will never cease from prosecuting my plan till the object shall be accomplished."—"I never was able to consider the African trade upon a ground disconnected with the employment of negroes in the West Indies, and distinct from their condition in the plantations whereon they serve. I conceive that *the true origin of the trade was not in the place it was begun at, but at the place of its final destination.*"

Mr. JEFFERSON also, in his "Notes," says of the prohibition of the importation of slaves: "This will, in some measure, stop the increase of this great political and moral evil, (slavery,) while the minds of our citizens may be ripening for a complete emancipation of human nature." From these, and ten thousand similar declarations on the part of others, we have the whole origin of the war against *the trade* in a nut shell. It can be told in two words: *prospective emancipation*. As CLARKSON contended, "*to prohibit the slave trade would be to lay the axe at the very root of slavery itself.*" The sequel of British history proved him a true prophet.

But there is more than a simple trueism in BURKE's observation; there is philosophy. It was the result of reflection, when he said "the true origin of the trade was at the place of its final destination;" the place where the slaves were imported. The real origin of the trade with this country was unquestionably the willingness of the colonists to purchase, and the profits derived from the labor of the slave. It is vain to cite the "petition of the



Burgesses," and the other evidences usually adduced to disprove this. It is a historical fact that, in spite of subsequent legislation, almost every colony fostered the trade in its early days. Maryland passed an act to encourage it at an early period. Virginia, at the time BEVERLY wrote, derived a revenue of twenty shillings *per capita* from the importation of slaves, which proved sufficient to defray "the charge of building and adorning the Capitol and erecting the public prison." The Carolinas purchased freely; and South Carolina, as late as 1803, literally reopened the slave trade, and kept it open until it was closed by act of Congress, in 1808. But there is a chapter in the history of Georgia which paints our "responsibility" for slavery and the slave trade in this country in bold relief. The following is a brief summary of the facts, as given by McCALL:

It was required of the original settlers of Georgia "that they should not, at any time, hire, keep, lodge, board or employ any negro within the colony, on any conditions whatsoever, without special leave from the trustees." This was in 1732. At the end of six years the trustees had sent over 1,520 indigent British emigrants, at a cost of £112,000 sterling, being an average of about £74 each. At that time a negro cost £30. Under such a disadvantage in the price of labor, as compared with the rest of the world, the people of Savannah, on the 9th of December, 1738, petitioned the trustees for an introduction of negroes into the colony. But, true to their design of planting a *white* and a *free* colony, the trustees rejected the petition. The consequence is thus recorded: "The tracts of land which had been planted with vines and mulberry trees, scarcely retained the vestiges of cultivation. \* \* \* Agriculture had not flourished, and commerce had scarcely been thought of." The result was that negroes were imported in spite of the trustees.

In 1747, "slavery had not yet been formally introduced, and may be said to have been licensed rather than authorized. The term for which the European servants were engaged, had generally expired, and there were no means of remedying this difficulty, except by hiring negroes from their owners in South Carolina; in which case, if any person attempted to enforce the regulation of the trustees, the owner appeared from Carolina and claimed his property. Finding that this plan of evading the law succeeded, negroes were *hired* for a hundred years, or during life, and a sum equal to the value of the negro was paid in advance. Finally, purchases were openly made in Savannah from African traders. Some seizures were made by those who opposed the principle; but as a majority of the magistrates were favorable to the introduction of slaves, legal decisions were suspended from time to time, and a strong disposition evinced by the courts to evade the operation of the law. So great was the majority on that side of the question, that anarchy and confusion were likely to be kindled into civil war."

GEORGE WHITFIELD, the reverend and distinguished founder of

the public orphan house of the colony, was one of those who favored the importation of slaves; and Mr. HABERSHAM, the president of the institution, declared plainly that "it could not be supported without them." The former, writing to a friend, said: "He had been taught by the exercise of his reflections to believe that God had some wise end in view in the permission of every occurrence, and though he could not fathom the purpose connected with the slavery of Africans, he had no doubt it would terminate to their advantage. When he took into view the wretched, miserable, starved condition of the negroes in their own country; that for the purpose of gaining a scant, temporary subsistence, the father had sold his sons, his daughters, nay his wife, to a barbarous, cruel foe—how much better must their condition be, when disposed of in a Christian country, where they are treated with mildness and humanity, and required to perform no more than that portion of labor, which, in some way or other, is the common lot of the human race."

The trustees were at length prevailed upon to convoke an assemblage of delegates from each district, deliberately to decide whether *slavery and the slave trade* should be legalized or not. The meeting was held in Savannah, and slavery agreed upon. Thus, says McCALL, were passed "the measures which *the people* had been so long anxious to adopt."

This wise and timely importation of slaves and legalization of slavery, occasioned a general revival of the drooping affairs of the colony. The abandoned fields were restored to culture. Agriculture and commerce began to flourish. Such was the impetus given to all departments of industry, that the exports of the colony, which in 1750 amounted to less than \$9,000, in six years after reached the sum of \$75,000. In forty years the negro population increased to 30,000. It is now approaching half a million, which, according, to prevailing prices, is \$300,000,000 worth of *piratical plunder*.

Here, then, fellow-Southerners, are the grounds of our responsibility for the existence of slavery. And now that a death-struggle is brewing, shall we seek to shirk it? No tongue among us will utter *aye*. Very shame, in the absence of honest conviction and intelligent comprehension, must seal every lip. It matters not who brought the slaves here; our fathers voluntarily, freely, eagerly bought them. British and Yankee vessels always have done our carrying trade; and it is just as reasonable to charge Old and New England with the responsibility of the tea, coffee, liquor, cotton, dry-goods, hardware, and other traffics, because their vessels and sailors are the *carriers*, as to shuffle off upon them the fancied enormous responsibility of bringing slaves to our ports, slaves whom we were so willing to buy, and from whose labor we have amassed so much wealth.

Whatever may have been the participation of Northern and British ship-owners in conducting the traffic, we, as a people, are clearly responsible, to whatever tribunal, for every slave that

was ever imported into the country. *Even since the independence of the United States, it is known that more than 100,000 slaves have been legally imported.* The (so called) responsibility is with us, and we do not seek to throw it upon others. There is nothing to be ashamed of, but much to be grateful for; and, as the tide of Abolition swells abroad and around us, why should we not rise superior to its menaces, and repel its encroachments through a profound sense of the social, political, economical, and moral integrity of our institution with all its past and present adjuncts?

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### No 5.

"Never was the prospect of emancipation more distant than now, that foreign slave-owners are establishing a monopoly of all the great staples of tropical produce. The islands which, in old times, supplied so much sugar, coffee, and cotton, are going out of cultivation, while Cuba, the United States and Brazil, are every day extending the area of their cultivation and the number of their slaves."—*London Times*.

"In any case, we cannot see why the ultra Abolitionists should impose their particular views upon us. Is not Africa an independent country? Is it confided to the tutelage of Bible societies? And France; cannot she act according to the dictates of her own conscience? There exists, in this respect, no international engagement that can limit her action."—*Paris Constitutionnel*.

Passing over other considerations, let us now inquire into the expediency of importing slaves from Africa. And, to commence, *who will oppose it most effectually?*

It is undeniable that the produce of slave labor in the Southern States, Cuba and Brazil, is a recognized necessity to mankind. If the curious statistician would sum up, in dollars and cents, the value of all the cotton, rice, tobacco, sugar, coffee, and other produce exported from these countries for the consumption of the rest of the world, and then add the wages of all those millions who are employed in the transportation, manufacture, sale, and consumption of these crops, and foot the column by the nett profits accruing to all the parties, the figures would startle him. Now, who of all these people and nations of the earth intend to be the most obstinate in opposing the importation of that labor which is so essential to their prosperity? It is the habit with some to regard the British Government as the divinely appointed guardian of Africa; but England will not be the most earnest opponent we shall have to encounter. For the present, it is sufficient to recall the vast interest she *knows* she has in our slavery.

It is estimated that a capital of at least \$500,000,000, and a population of over 5,000,000 in Great Britain, are immediately dependent upon our cotton for profit, wages and support. More



than seventy-five per cent. of the cotton worked up in the British mills comes from our plantations. To this must be added an endless string of items, all affording employment and profit to the people of the British Empire. If then it should appear that the increase in slave labor *here* must add to the prosperity of hireling labor *there*; and, on the contrary, that a determined opposition, on the part of the British Government, to such increase of labor, must permanently injure the interests represented at Liverpool and Manchester, can it be supposed that Downing Street will continue to be quietly indulged in the old crisp and shriveled fantasies of "the Broughams and Wilberforces?"

Impossible! The commercial spirit and thrifty ventures of the present age are leaving far behind them the canting hypocrisy of the past. While we, at our firesides, are changing our moral views in relation to the civilization which God has given us to develop, our old enemies, in their mills and counting-rooms across the water, are drifting along the same current, albeit the chart which guides them is interest, and their polar star is profit. Price is a most potent agent. There are hopes of its yet assuaging the griefs of philanthropy, on the principle of a counter irritant, removing distress and care from empty-headed zealots to empty-pocketed *masses* of people crying for bread.

Heretofore, the only crises which have disturbed the cotton interest of England have grown out of money pressures, or "strikes" for an increase of wages. But awfully different would be the case if the "strike" should be for *low wages rather than none!* which could be occasioned only by a permanent deficiency in the supply of raw cotton. The "strike" would be a terrific one for *existence*. Those of us whose attention may have been called to the matter, will remember the deplorable accounts of the "Lancashire strikes," a few years since. The town of Preston, for example, was described as having the appearance of a besieged city. The workmen had been so long out of work, and the supplies from the "Trades Union" had become so scanty, that the population, with sunken cheeks and lank sides, looked more like sufferers from a protracted siege, than free citizens in an open town of England.

In a few months the funds of the "Trades Union" and the "Benefit Societies" were exhausted, and it was found that the only effect produced was a loss of over a half million of pounds sterling to the cotton interest; and, as a fit conclusion to the affair, delegations of workmen from every part of the kingdom were invited to London to deliberate in what was significantly called "*a labor Parliament*." Now, such "strikes" as these can always be effectually put down, because they seek to violate the laws of economy and of nature. They are contests between capital and labor, in which the former is sure to triumph. Labor must eat its daily bread; capital can hold a long fast. But, whenever a deficiency of slaves to cultivate our cotton occasions a large and permanent deficiency in the Liverpool market, and there is no forth-

coming supply from our sources, the present cry for "another America" proving vain, the "strike" will no longer be that of the workmen against their employers; the struggle will cease to be that of labor against capital. It will have required no prescience to satisfy all interested that the scarcity and high price of cotton *there* is due to the scarcity of slaves to cultivate it *here*, which is the consequence of the prohibition of the slave-trade.

A further opposition to the trade would be *unprofitable*, and the policy of Downing Street would have to conform to the pressing demands of Liverpool and Manchester. A continued deficiency of cotton would change "short time into no time," mills would be closed, and the result would be a "labor Parliament" on the one hand, and a "spinner's Parliament" on the other. Cotton would be demanded by both, at any hazard, *even if it cost the sacrifice of the abolition influence*, and a COTTON PARLIAMENT would be witnessed in England equal in its results to any of her "mad Parliaments," her "long Parliaments," or her "Rump Parliaments." The *London Times* is eminently correct in saying that "the world is wiser than it was when Abolitionists ruled it." Commerce now rules. *It is king*; cotton is heir-apparent, and slavery is queen-dowager. Whatever, then, may be the present views of Great Britain in relation to *our* importation of slaves, we can all endorse the sentiment of the "*Constitutionnel*"—"the rest of the world is not obliged to adopt them as its rule of conduct."

But if the British Government *were* empowered and disposed to offer opposition, it will be the subject of another letter, in relation to our treaty obligations, to show with what ease we could strip her alike of the pretext and the power.

The only other quarter, outside of our own limits, from which opposition would arise, would be the hireling States. There it would, in the first instance, at least, be hot and furious. The politicians, both lay and clerical, could desire no richer theme. Every street "loafer" would become a CLARKSON, every Congressman would be a WILBERFORCE, every itinerant preacher would be another WESLEY, and even the printers' devil would spring up into FRANKLINS. But, surely, these changes need not appal us. Nor would they, in fact, be changes. The eminent characters exist already.

Is there, indeed, any further progress for the Abolition sentiment to make in the hireling States? What is it that the South needs which the North does not oppose? If Abolitionists glory in stealing the negroes we already have, it will only be a different glory for them to "howl" over our getting any more, and "shriek" for Africa. Now, have we not been yoked with these people long enough to know them? The scales are gradually balancing between us. The long account must some day be settled; and are *we* to make false entries, by omitting every item that *they* will object to? If so, we may as well omit slavery itself, and abandon the contest at once. No; it does not become us to hesitate in

seeking what we want, even if it be negroes from Africa. *They* seek what they want with unflinching pertinacity. Nothing is attainable till the attempt is made. And if the South is to wait in silence until the North chooses to dissolve the Union, as some advise, she had better prepare for a tedious vigil of ages.

But, after all, is the project of importing African slaves so Quixotic as some suppose? Weigh the motives and the obstacles, the evils and the benefits. When the Quakers first petitioned, and CLARKSON first organized his committee, there were a thousand times more difficulties in their way, in spite of their having religious fanaticism for a stipendiary. As the *London Times* truly says, "they were content to be merely destructives;" *they* were doubtless looked upon as Quixotic, yet their success was *complete*. Why, then, should the South not boldly enter upon the policy, which so many of her people have at heart, which is so manifestly to her interest, and which the interests of other countries conspire to promote? *Such a Quixote* never lived.

Conceding, then, that a very warm opposition to any further importation of slaves must be expected, as a matter of course, from Northern politicians, lay and clerical, it remains to inquire whether any insurmountable obstacle exists among ourselves.

## No. 6.

"Now, to these countries we have given a monopoly of products which are the chief basis of our industry, or among the chief sources of our revenue. They are becoming rich, powerful, arrogant, every day less inclined to be guided by English councils, or moved by English interference."—*London Times*.

"Parliament already resounds with the declaration of grievances, the most grievous of which is, that they cannot have laborers from Africa except they purchase them again. It is a natural result of the social state of that country. Slavery is the general condition of its working population."—*Paris Constitutionnel*.

The question with which my last letter was concluded, whether, among ourselves, there is any insurmountable obstacle to the importation of African slaves, opens the broad proposition as to the expediency of such a measure.

It admits of no dispute, that every new country, such as ours, must receive from abroad a considerable portion of its labor. The experience of all America shows it, while the general clamor for Asiatic and African emigrants, in the British and French colonies, dove-tails exactly with Cuban, Brazilian, and American demands for slaves. And any disturbing cause which will cut off this supply of labor, before the natural demand for it ceases, must prove



detrimental. It is true, a partial monopoly in the production of such staples as cotton, rice, coffee, sugar, and tobacco, may for a time seem to obviate the evil, but it can neither postpone nor prevent the check imposed upon the growth and prosperity of the country. This is precisely the position in which the South has been placed by the interdiction of the African slave-trade. We systematically exclude the only labor we need to import, to rival the leading nations of the earth, in all respects essential to prosperity and power. Let us illustrate the error.

Suppose there be, in a new country, two adjacent bodies of land of 1,000 acres each, equal in quality and productive capacity, each having 200 acres under cultivation and 800 in wood, and each with twenty slaves. Say their crops amount to the same for a given year; and suppose that one estate is held under the condition that not another slave shall ever be purchased to labor on it, and that no other labor is ever to be used in clearing and cultivating the remaining 800 acres but that derived from the natural increase of the slaves already on it; while the other, having no such condition, is at liberty to receive as much additional labor as the proceeds of each succeeding crop will purchase, for the cultivation of the remaining eight hundred acres.

Now, if these two estates were offered for sale, what practical planter would pay as much for the one as the other? Not one; and why? Because the condition imposed on one makes an incalculable difference in their future value. At the end of a term of years, the one which can *purchase labor* will have *appreciated in value*, and doubled its number of slaves, its cultivated area, and its income, which latter can either be invested in a further purchase of labor and of land, or else in stocks, railroads, commerce, or manufactures; while the other, with the restriction on its labor, will, under the most favorable circumstances, have but a trifling increase in its labor, cultivation, and income. And, in the meantime, this superabundance of land will be certain to induce an exhausting system of culture, calculated to impair the productive capacity of the soil, and so *depreciate its value*. Such is the contrast which, under the existing prohibition of the slave trade, would subsist between the south and any other portion of the globe, having a free ingress of labor and equal resources, if such there were.

It is not contended that our section of the Union has not been, and is not now, in a prosperous condition; fortune has taken better care of us, perhaps, than we have been disposed to take of ourselves, and it certainly is surprising with what strides we have advanced; but this goes to show how much greater would have been our progress if this restriction upon our labor had never been imposed. How many among us will sign a deed binding our heirs never to buy another negro to work on our estates? Yet is not this exactly what the act of 1807 has done for the South at large? The Southern States make up together one vast, united and indissoluble planting interest. Our general wealth and prosperity are

simply the aggregate wealth and prosperity of the individuals of our community, and if there is *not one among us* who will bind himself never to buy another slave, with what propriety, upon what principle of economy, or even self-respect, is it that *all of us* live under laws which bind us, in our aggregate capacity, to precisely the same condition?

What prosperous slaveholder, who annually goes to the vendue table in America, to import slaves to *his plantation*, can reconcile it with his conscience to prevent his neighbor from doing the same thing at a lower price in Africa? Can he possibly dream of *monopolizing* slave property, and setting up in this age and country a slave aristocracy? Hardly. But, it may be said, we can buy from one another. Will such a traffic add anything to the productive power of the country? It has long existed among us, and what has it accomplished but the withdrawal of slaves from one point to concentrate them at another. He who buys in this market may cultivate more land and add to the produce of his plantation, but he who sells must cultivate less! Nothing is added to the produce of the country. The *rate* of increase of cultivation must be still limited to the rate of the natural increase of our slave population! Though a million of slaves be bought and sold during the year, no addition can *thereby* accrue to our productive industry.

In the debate on the old Articles of Confederation, JOHN ADAMS expressed this principle so clearly that I cannot but reproduce it. He said, in substance: "It is of no consequence by what name you call your people, whether by that of freemen or of slaves—the difference, as to the *state*, is imaginary only. What matters it whether a landlord, employing ten laborers on his farm, gives them annually as much money as will buy the necessaries of life, or gives them those necessaries at short hand? The ten laborers add as much wealth annually to the State, and increase its exports, in one case as in the other. \* \* \* How does the Southern farmer procure slaves. Either by importation or purchase at home. *If he imports a slave, he adds one to the number of laborers in the country; if he buys from his neighbor, it is only a transfer of labor from one farm to another, which does not change the production of the State.* A slave may, from the custom of speech, be more properly called the wealth of his *master* than the free laborer can be called the wealth of his employer; but *as to the State, both are its wealth.*

But the demand for slaves must be controlled by the demand for their produce: hence one consideration is, whether the demand for the produce is such as to occasion a demand for Africans. This is a commercial question. Every well-informed man is prepared to answer it. *Another America* is what England clamors for; and the only way to get what is needed is to bring Africa across the water. Asia is out of the question, and so is Europe. Something can be made of Australia, with compulsory labor, but Africa breathes death, instead of life, into the white man's nostrils. One America is quite enough for the world, *provided it is cultivated,*

and its cultivation is to be effected only by the approved method of importing African slaves. Columbus is surpassed by no benefactor of the human race. His discovery united the ends of the earth. Is it not so?

When the Almighty architect dispersed chaos, and divided the waters of earth by continents destined for the habitation of man, it is manifest his infinite wisdom was not addressed to the mere distribution of seasons, climate, soil, production, and temperature. The hand which congealed the ice and stamped the polar regions with the seal of mystery, was lavish in dispensing heat to the tropics to melt the blue waters of the sea. If the snows of winter attest a fixed design, the summer cloud gives voice to another edict of the imperturbable Creator. If the pale moon, shedding her pensive light over a sleeping world, evinces the presence of a mysterious but benign Divinity, the black raging storm of midnight is but the breath of an awful God. Even while the land is made to rejoice in its tranquil verdure, the sea is gladdened, and will dance in cadence with the roaring winds. Grand but anomalous are these eternal elements. Yet they harmonize for a single purpose, and promote the welfare of man. If all nature *serves* a purpose, is man alone exempt from such service? Abolitionists presume to this exemption, but nature contradicts it. The earth is to be replenished.

It may be that mystery enwraps the design of God in distributing mankind over the several continents of the earth; but it is clear that there is some great object, some co-ordinate design, in the geographical division of the earth, inseparable from the division of mankind into races. The world, we know, was made for man; but were the different continents made for the different races? In an improved condition, man is migratory. There is hardly a portion of the civilized world which has not been invaded and wrested from its aboriginal race. The whole North American continent has but recently been appropriated to a superior and a ruling race, while the aborigines are rapidly disappearing. It is not, then, the design of the Creator, in isolating the continents, to restrict the races of men to their original localities forever. The fiat for all time is, that man, while he shall eat bread only in the sweat of his brow, shall nevertheless go forth and "replenish the earth." And how has this mighty work, thus far, been accomplished?

Nation has fallen before nation; empire after empire has crumbled to decay: one race of men has made place for another; and yet every corner of the earth is peopled. The depths of the sea and the heights of space have been explored and measured. The ways and habits of the very winds are known and converted to our use. The great cities of antiquity have perished, and are lost. Ninevah is but a study for the antiquary; and mighty Babylon, "which sat a Queen," and "was decked with gold," is fallen; "it is thrown down and shall be found no more at all." Jerusalem, the pride of a chosen people, has been "compassed with armies," and "all her pleasant things are laid waste;" the vale



of her Temple has been rent ; the wonted incense of her altars no longer mounts up, and she "is a desolation." Rome too is ended. Her power is departed, and her glory is no more forever. Wars have consumed the nations. The great rivers of earth have been stained with the blood of generations. And massacre, conflagration, and famine have added untold horror to the ravages of time. But, in spite of all, the decree is enforced, *the earth is replenished*. All creation has prospered, and rejoiced, saving only Africa ! She is still an impenetrable gloom, a land of mystery, pestilence, and death.

With but two exceptions, she affords nothing to history. When HERMES departed from the "rivers of Babylon" and planted his colony in Ethiopia, it is said he laid the foundations of that wonderful civilization which characterized Egypt. But this was not destined to extend through Africa. Egypt was raised to power that it might become the land of bondage ; and when the chosen people of God were delivered from their captivity, "the sea saw it and fled," but, in its rushing recoil, engulfed both PHAROAH and his host. The PTOLEMES advanced her to the summit of her greatness, only that ~~em~~ing CLEOPATRA might sacrifice her to Rome. And so, when DIDO landed on the African coast and built up Carthage, a foreign civilization was a second time planted on that fated continent. But as the Babylonish arts could extend no further than Egypt, so were the Phœnician limited to Carthage. These types of ancient civilization left no offspring in Africa. The one grafted a few elements of its grandeur upon a Grecian or Jewish offshoot, while the other took refuge to the Spanish coast. And thus the civilizations which have in vain been nurtured on this forbidden soil, have successively recoiled from the contact which nature declares to be repulsive and fruitless.

When Egyptian splendor was at its meridian, Europe was wrapt in darkness and obscurity. A few sparks were caught up on her southern border, and at length a portion of mankind were awakened to the scintillations of a new philosophy. While the Asiatic schools were lapsing into their prolonged stagnation, Greek civilization sprang up, the embodiment of human intelligence, skill, and refinement. And in good time the city which sat upon seven hills personified human power. SOLON, SOCRATES, and PLATO, are names imperishable while Grecian lore is read ; and Rome must ever be a household word. These two fountains of European civilization have, in turn, overflowed the surrounding nations. In the East the royal hero of Macedon wept over the fate which deprived him of another world to conquer, while in the West the great founder of the Roman empire could not be satiated until he had planted his eagles on the confines of Caledonia.

Africa is just as old as Asia and Europe ; but how does it compare with them ? It is still the cannibal's home. Withdrawn by the inviolable laws of nature from the prying scrutinies of science, it seems doubly excluded from the prospect of enlightenment. The labors of a continued mission are squandered in vain. Neither

the arts of peace nor the stratagems of war can make a lasting impression. Commerce is restricted to the coast; art hovers over but a few salient points; and the sword sickens from miasma. Here, then, is a country whose very atmosphere is a death-warrant to every race but negroes. Here, also, is a race of men whose labor, and whose alone, can "replenish" the bulk of the American continent. These men are slaves. They are for sale. What shall prevent us from buying them if we want them? In fact, there cannot be "*another America*." When "God saw everything that he had made," that "it was very good," and "the heavens and the earth were finished," He seems to have been content with but one Africa and one America. The wisdom of British philanthropy has alone discovered the necessity for another.

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### No. 7.

"So valuable is the slave in Cuba that, in spite of treaties and penal laws, cruisers and blockades, thousands of Africans are yearly carried across the Atlantic to work on the sugar and tobacco plantations. The wealth of the island is such that, in spite of misgovernment, oppressive taxes and a Spanish army of 25,000 men, its proprietors are among the richest in the world."—*London Times*.

"The philanthropists have made some stupid blunders, which should force them into private life, or at least teach them to speak with becoming modesty in future. In this situation of things, when it has been proved that the system has utterly failed, is it astonishing that we should try another? This would at least give new activity to colonial productions."—*Paris Constitutionnel*.

So general is the impression that the American slave market would be immediately glutted if the African slave-trade were reopened, it can scarcely be a work of supererogation to dwell further upon it. Who would think of importing a cargo of African slaves, unless he was well assured of a market? Who would carry a slave from Richmond to sell in New Orleans, unless he knew there was capital in the latter city seeking investment in slaves and willing to pay a price which will afford him a profit? Does not the same principle apply? Are not the parties equally in search of a market? And can a market exist unless there is capital awaiting investment? Is there any more likelihood of a man's importing a hundred negroes without a good market, than of his importing, to the same cost, any other property with the same prospect? We may rest assured that, even if all restrictions were removed, no negro will ever be imported until buyers are waiting to purchase.

The truth is, all traffic is controlled by the same law—the law of profit. Trade is bargain, and there must be at least two parties



to a bargain. Yet it has been seriously asked whether *one hundred thousand* slaves might not be imported into a *single State* in one year, ("the first season.") What an idea! Why at the low price of \$200 each, such a number would require an investment of \$20,000,000! The whole South has not that much spare capital for investment in slaves "the first season." But apply the supposition to the South generally. "Suppose the importation of the first season to reach one hundred thousand" in each of the Southern States, "and the traders to demand the highest market price"—what amount of capital would be invested that "season?" Fourteen States, at \$20,000,000 each, would make up the sum of \$280,000,000 for 1,400,000 negroes. This would require a fleet of one thousand vessels of six hundred tons, and twenty thousand seamen, each vessel making two voyages for the season." But even this does not come up to the extravagant estimate which has been put upon "the number of Africans which it will be necessary to import for the attainment of any given end." It is apprehended that "the depressing effect of such importation would be much greater than is expressed by a simple arithmetical ratio." After the most astute arithmetic investigation, the mighty *calculus* has been invoked as the most "suitable instrument of investigation," and the problem is solved either by leaving everything to *time*, or else importing *ten millions of African barbarians*, whose very diseases shock our refined sensibilities! This stupendous importation would give employment to the above mentioned commercial marine for eight years, and drain Africa of a fourth of her slaves! The idea is too grand ever to be realized. Apply it to the test of actual experience.

What is the largest amount of slaves *ever known* to have been exported from Africa in a given year? Does it approach 100,000, still less 1,400,000? In one hundred years, ending with 1807, so far as can be ascertained, there were not 400,000 slaves imported into this country, which is less than 4,000 per annum. The largest average for any four years is less than ten thousand. And the largest number in a single year is less than 17,000. According to Abolition authority, (for which, of course, *great* allowances must be made, say at least 50 per cent.) the whole number of slaves ever imported into the British West Indies was 1,700,000; and the slave-trade between Africa and *all countries* has never but once reached \$5,000 in a year.

It is quite true that if the slave-trade were legalized, or if even a successful system of smuggling were established, which would require no uncommon ingenuity, probably more slaves would be imported than ever before. In fifty years our country has grown, and our population and wealth increased. Of course, then, there is more capital in the country seeking investment in slave labor than there was a half century ago. When but little cotton was raised, our fathers were all tainted with Abolition scruples, and had a weak stomach at the thought of a native African. But the

laws of trade and the nature of man, both white and black, have not changed in that time.

We can put "QUASHEE" to work with even less compunction than our fathers did, for the *proceeds* have had a decidedly tonic effect; and "QUASHEE" himself will work with a better will now than formerly. He will find better examples set him, and bacon and homespun are more abundant. In a single word, it still requires money to buy slaves; they will not be imported when the money gives out; the slave-market is not more liable to be glutted than any other; and slave labor is not likely ever to be "an incubus upon the country."

One limit, then, to the importation of slaves, being the amount of capital in the country seeking investment in such property, there are three others to which a brief reference will be made: the consumption of slave produce, the number obtainable in Africa, and the number exported from Virginia, North Carolina, and the other older Southern States.

If the consumer does not buy produce, the planter cannot sell it. If the planter cannot sell his produce, he can have no money to buy slaves. If there is no money to buy slaves, none will be imported. Was it ever feared that too many ploughs would be made, or that too many horses would be raised, or too many steam-engines built? Did the most rigid economist ever dread the *importation* of too much clothing, too much food, or the means of obtaining them, *too much labor*? That the demand of capital for *additional labor* must be governed by the consumptive demands for the *produce* of that labor is too evident to be doubted. And, in this point of view, it is plain that the demand for African slaves in the Southern States, or anywhere else, must be limited by the demand for the produce of their labor in Liverpool, Havre, and other markets.

Now, it will hardly be denied that there is a great deficiency of labor in the Southern States, as compared with the demand for it, growing, as such demand must, out of an accumulation of capital. After examining all the evidence it would seem like a wilful lack of comprehension to persist in doubting the fact. The fear seems to be that if the foreign slave-trade is legalized, there will immediately be a *glut of labor* in the land, and the vested interests of the South will suffer detriment. This point claims investigation. Is such a thing as a sudden superabundance of slave-labor *possible*? The economist must answer.

ADAM SMITH says: "The demand for those who live by wages, (or, in other words, the demand for labor,) necessarily increases with the increase of the revenue and stock of every country, and cannot possibly increase without it. The increase of revenue and stock is the increase of national wealth. The demand for labor, therefore, naturally increases with the national wealth, and cannot possibly increase without it." As to a sudden glut of labor, he observes, in substance: "At the conclusion of every war more



than one hundred thousand soldiers and sailors are at once discharged, and we see no alteration in the wages of labor, nor in any other particular, which the sudden influx might be expected to effect." This, though not strictly parallel with the case in point, serves strikingly to illustrate the almost impossibility of a sudden superabundance of labor.

THOMAS COOPER observes: "The demand must exist for labor before laborers can be employed. What is it, then, that occasions the want of the demand for labor? Without a previous command of capital, how is it possible for a demand for labor to exist? And without the labor is in demand, *unless it be wanted*, who will pay for it? Accumulated capital, therefore, *gradually increasing*, is the *only* source of demand for labor." And again: "Additional wealth can be procured only by an addition to the number of laborers, or by an addition to their productive skill. For both these purposes additional capital is necessary. There can be no addition to the present full complement of laborers till the employment of fresh capital creates the demand for them, and the means of subsisting them."

These extracts, and the undivided concurrence of other economists, establish the fact that one limit to the increase of slave labor by means of importation, must be the amount of capital seeking investment in such labor, of which more will be said in another letter.

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#### No. 8.

"As to the United States it is indeed folly to expect any change in that quarter. Slavery on the North American Continent has extended, is extending, will extend."—*London Times*.

"To deprive Africa of contact with civilization, under the pretext of preserving peace among her tribes, is to act like a quack, who, to cure an eruption, kills his patient by the internal concentration of the disease."—*Paris Constitutionnel*.

The surplus slave population of the older Southern States, if the expression be allowed, partially supplying the demand for labor in the newer States, and thereby absorbing a certain amount of capital, will be another and a very material check to a superabundant importation from Africa; and the impossibility of obtaining more than a limited supply, even in Africa, under the circumstances which would follow our revival of the slave-trade, would be still another. But whether or not these checks would combine to prevent the great influx which is so much dreaded, it must be remembered that each State Government could for itself prevent importation.

It is the right of every State to decide what description of men

shall be allowed to enter her limits. Every act of the Federal Government might be repealed, and still few or no slaves imported into Virginia or the Carolinas, if those States wished to prevent it. Congress can only prohibit—it cannot authorize importation in *contravention* of the State authorities; and even the power to prohibit is susceptible of grave dispute, in the event of a case being made before the courts of the country. Regarding, then, African slaves ever becoming an “incubus upon the country” as a simple impossibility, let us for a moment consider what would be the effect of importing them.

It is with profound deference that I venture an opinion which, though it be the result of mature reflection, may be erroneous; yet it does seem that, if as many slaves were imported as would supply the demands of capital not absorbed in the domestic trade, there would be no *sudden* effect produced upon the vested interests of the South. A *gradual* reduction would probably occur in the price of slave labor, but this would be too slow to occasion inconvenience to parties now interested in mortgages, bonds, settlements, or other obligations; and it is only a sudden change of price that can effect the material interests of the country. Besides, the price of land would rise with the same certainty that the price of slaves would fall, because labor imparts value to land. Since the days of Paradise, what is land without labor? The landed interest of the country would surely suffer no detriment. An increase of labor, the only active source of value, would increase our agricultural produce, and consequently, stimulate commerce, navigation, manufactures, and the mechanic arts, and all these interests would be benefitted. But in this moneyed age it is startling to hear of a reduction in *price*. Let us see if we should regret a reduction in the price of slaves.

Since the beginning of this year, the account sales of over 2,000 negroes have come under my observation in a few newspapers from different sections of the South, and their average price has been \$635, making an aggregate investment of \$1,270,000. Now, in spite of the late money pressure, how many of these two thousand were really mortgaged for the price they sold at, or even *half* the price? How many of them *cost* their former owners what they lately sold for? If the truth could be known, it would more than probably be found that nine out of ten sold at an enormous appreciation above cost or liability for debt. The true effect, then, of these high prices, is to add to the assets of the *very few* who *sell*, either to pay debts or to speculate; while the *many*, who *buy* as a permanent investment, must realize a proportionately diminished *profit* by having to invest at a higher rate. The slave who costs \$500 and produces four bags of cotton, is twice as profitable and just as valuable as the one of the same age who costs \$1,000, and produces four bags under the same circumstances. Who refuses to buy a cheap horse, a cheap plow, or a cheap cotton-gin? The effect of the scarcity of slaves, as compared with the demand for them, is to enrich the slave-trader, but certainly not to benefit the



great mass of slave-owners, who have not the remotest intention of selling even the most worthless of their slaves.

People, in common parlance, are too apt to regard slave property as a sort of *stock in trade*, but this is as general as it is egregious an error. Out of the 4,000,000 slaves in our possession, or even out of the 200,000 that annually change homes, under the impetus of emigration, how many are sold as stock in trade? After the most assiduous investigation, which of course can afford but imperfect information, I believe not 10,000! Now, what company, with a capital stock of \$1,000,000, or even of \$200,000, could survive a year on the profits of the sale of only \$10,000 of its stock? But to come from generalities to particulars, are not the richest and most prosperous planters, and slave owners generally, those who never sell? How many hundreds of estates are there from which no slave has ever been sold? Yet, what changes take place in the *price* of those whom their neighbors sell! But do *these* changes affect *their* wealth? Do they reduce their crops or the price of their crops?

It would be well to remember, that the value of labor, in a new country like ours, is not governed by the same laws which control the price of merchandize. Labor is productive, and its *price* may vary according to the annual demand for its produce, but its *value* does not. Produce is perishable, and its value as well as price is controlled by the quantity in the market. In one case the value is that of "use," in the other it is that of "exchange." Labor is not for sale, the produce is. A few large crops may cheapen produce, say 20 per cent.; but this fact of itself does not cheapen labor, because the amount of labor employed is still the same—the capital invested and the cost of support is unchanged. And, on the other hand, a few short crops may appreciate produce 20 per cent.; but it does not follow that labor appreciates in proportion; after all the fluctuations in the price of *produce*, the value of the *labor* will be found to be unchanged. Because a farmer loses a crop, does he consider his slaves, his horses, mules and cattle worthless? Crops are annual affairs; but an investment in lands and negroes is a lifetime business. Besides, produce is made to be *sold*, and what is not sold is the exception; but lands and negroes are bought to be *kept*, and what are sold make the exception. It is quite true there is an inseparable connection between the price of produce and the price of labor; all I urge is, that their respective *values* do not vary in the same ratio, because the sale of the one is the rule, and of the other only the exception.

Suppose two million slaves produce four million bags of cotton, and that the price of slaves for that year is \$500, and of the cotton \$40 per bag. The slaves would be commonly *said* to be worth \$1,000,000,000, and the cotton \$160,000,000. Now if this is a true saying, the \$1,000,000,000 ought to be forthcoming in case the two million slaves are offered for sale, *with the same certainty* that the \$160,000,000 is paid for the cotton. But we all know that while the cotton would continue to sell, to the very last bag, at

\$40, the appearance of two million slaves in a year on the vendue table would reduce their price from \$500 down to perhaps \$5. Yet those *same slaves* would be just as competent to produce four million more bags of cotton the coming year, which might again sell for the same sum of \$160,000,000, as before. It is unnecessary to point out the reason of this. We annually sell *all* of our market produce, and the rest of the world are cash bidders; but if we offered *all* of our slaves for sale, where would we find a purchaser? A reduction in the *price* of slaves need not alarm us; slaves are not stock in trade.

A word as to profits. Where there is competition, a reduction in the price of labor is apt to cause a reduction in the price of that labor's produce; but since the latter depends upon the former, it follows that the profits, which is the difference between these two prices, is at least not likely to decrease, unless new competition intervenes, which is almost impossible in our case. So far from the profits of slave-labor being diminished by a further importation of slaves, it may be laid down, with as much certainty as any human probability can, that the capital now vested in slaves in the cotton States, and in all the new States, would be the first benefited. And this is due to the fact, that, in all slave countries, labor is owned conjointly with land. Large slave-holders are always large land-owners. Being largely possessed of cultivable land, they always have capital which they design for the purchase of labor, particularly if labor is cheap; and hence it may be inferred that whenever the slave-trade is opened, *they* will be first in the market and foremost to avail themselves of a reduction in price, and thereby demonstrate the fact that the measure will benefit the great landed and slave interests of the country; and, these being the bases of all others, the benefit would extend to them proportionately.

If we would, what a lesson we could learn from the history of our older States! Their agricultural fortunes were built up by native Africans and their immediate descendants, *when slave labor was cheap*. Apply to the Western rivers and swamps the same cheapness of labor that subdued the Eastern, and a much more rapid improvement will appear. Land now of little value would appreciate beyond precedent. Of all persons Western land speculators ought to favor the slave-trade.

But besides cheapening slave-labor, another effect of importing slaves would be to check Northern pressure upon the frontier Southern States, the consideration of which must be the subject of another letter.

## No. 9.

"Even the Northern slave States, which but a few years ago were discussing the gradual abandonment of the system, are now silent about Abolition, immediate or prospective."—*London Times*.

"The poor negro captives destined for human sacrifice, would hardly call it philanthropy to leave them to their fate, under pretext of a humane objection to their purchase."—*Paris Constitutionnel*.

The undoubted consequence of the present scarcity of slaves is a rise in their price, and the result of this is the concentration of slave labor in the hands of the wealthy, and in the richest districts of country. And the final consequence must be, first, to render slavery a *local interest* in those States having a marked geographical difference of climate, soil, and production; and, second, to occasion an undue migration from the northern frontier States of the South into the others, both of which are hurtful to Southern interests. This migration of slaves is naturally induced by the constant pressure of Northern opinion and influences upon the border *counties*; but it must be accelerated throughout the border *States* by the high price of slaves, which renders it profitable, at the same time that it is prudent to yield to this Northern pressure, and make room for the cheapest labor. Thus it is that Northern pressure *against*, and Southern demands *for* slave labor, (under the existing prohibition of the slave-trade,) combine to prevent a natural diffusion of slavery throughout the border States. But, if the South at large were to receive additional labor from abroad, as all new countries require, no demonstration is requisite to show that slavery would be more generally diffused, and Northern pressure against the institution would be much less potent.

Again: the high price of slaves brings hireling and slave labor into an undesirable conflict. There is a security and permanence in the possession of slave labor quite unknown in the possession of hireling labor, and this is paid for in the *price* of the slave. This assurance of the secure possession of the slave's labor stands in lieu of the money paid for him, and is the essence of slave property. The support of the slave is his wages; and, since secure possession prevents those fluctuations in the item of support or wages, which are occasioned, under the laws of demand and supply, in the case of hireling or insecure labor, they appear in the *price* of the slave; and, being occasioned by similar causes, are similar in character. Hence, although the cost of the slave is *capital*, it must ordinarily be governed by the same general laws which control the wages of the hireling. This description of capital, then, unlike others, is subject to the laws which govern wages. And this suggests the great danger of introducing any disturbing cause adverse to a supply of slave labor corresponding with the demand for it, while the supply of hireling labor is un-



bounded. The immediate consequence of such disturbing cause is a rise in the price of slaves very disproportionate to any rise in wages. This rise being occasioned by statute law, and not by the natural law of cause and effect, is artificial, and, being unaccompanied by any similar rise in wages, amounts to a bonus on hiring labor—a protective tax—and of course renders it proportionately cheaper, and practically invites it to a struggle with slave labor for the mastery, wherever climate will admit. The invitation is readily accepted. The contest begins in our towns and villages, and on our public works, railroads and canals. Secure labor, being capital, is necessarily timid; for nothing is more timid than capital. Insecure labor, not being a vested interest—having nothing to lose and everything to gain—pushes forward on a venture. When to this are added the decided effects of the negro mania upon the public mind, and the marvelous supineness of slaveholders, it is easy to understand the danger of bringing hiring and slave labor into conflict in our more Southern States, or of encouraging the struggle in the border States, where it already exists. Artificially high price for slaves, naturally low wages for hirelings, and unrelenting Abolition hostility to the South when brought into co-operative action, must conspire to our embarrassment and ruin.

It may be objected that *high price*, whether artificial or not, is beneficial to some of the Southern States. On this point, much is to be said when the discussion becomes more minute; for the present, it is sufficient to know that *low price* would benefit by much the greater number. The truth is too palpable to be questioned, that large and commanding interests in the South *need* a speedy addition to their productive capacity. And if this addition is to be accompanied by a general reduction in the price of slaves, surely a small majority in a few States will not clog the progress and prosperity of all the rest! Is it not to be expected that Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi and other States would like to stock their plantations upon the same cheap terms that their elder sisters, Virginia and the Carolinas, did? Besides, is it not policy for the older States to put it within the power of their small farmers and mechanics to purchase a few slaves at a reasonable price? If this were done, an improvement would be witnessed similar to that mentioned in the case of Georgia; a new impulse would be given to the productive industry of the whole South, and a yoke would be removed which has been more fatal to our material progress and political power than all the tariffs and compromises of Congress put together, hurtful as they have been. If it were desired to destroy the former equilibrium between the North and South, and to cripple the prosperity of the latter, *in a way more certain than any other*, the plan would be to cut off the supply of labor needed for the demands of accumulating capital. Capital would thus be forced to seek investment abroad, and home industry would soon become tributary to foreign progress. This is the

curse under which the South has languished for fifty years. With one hand we have shut the door against an increase of labor from abroad, while with the other we have opened a vent for our productive labor and capital.

Having mentioned the concentration of slave property in the hands of comparatively few individuals as one of the evil consequences of a continued scarcity of slaves, I must ask not to be understood as saying that every Southern man, be he rich or poor, slaveholder or non-slaveholder, is not vitally interested in preserving and protecting slavery, just as he is with respect to land and property in general; yet it may well be questioned whether his interest is more *enlisted* in one case than in the other, and whether, if slavery becomes a monied monopoly, he would not be much more *tempted* to recreancy in one case than in the other. A deadly war is waging against us; and while we are fortifying our position against external enemies, we should be careful to preserve our internal strength. To do this, a common interest should not only exist in theory, but be visible and material, in order to be *felt*. The pauper feels no interest in the prosperity of banks, nor in the price of stocks; but the small stockholder of a few shares feels as deep an interest in the dividends as the owner of many; and we may be assured that he whose capital consists of a few negroes is just as earnest and reliable a defender of slavery as he who owns five hundred.

It would be well for those in whose hands this property is becoming concentrated, to avoid a perpetual exclusion of slaves from the farms or the work-shops of their poorer fellow-citizens, by refusing to monopolize slave labor, (under the prohibitory law of Congress which virtually gives it its price,) and thereby repudiate the erection of a slave aristocracy in the very heart of the South. It is as much as we can do to keep our *external* enemies at bay; let us occasionally glance within. I do not seek to justify, still less to propagate unfounded opinions; but have no hesitation in saying it is the *duty* of those intrusted with legislative powers to place *us, the Southern people*, upon an equal footing of *free-trade in labor* with other people, by removing this fifty years' embargo on slave labor. And if they fail at least to make the effort, they merit the reproach which time will surely justify—a reproach which may not reach *our* ears, but which, when our fair fields shall become a howling wilderness, may sigh forth, in cadence with the passing winds, the dirge of a fallen race. God forbid that such a requiem should break upon the harmony of his creation? But, hemmed in, and beset as we are, it is the part of wisdom to take a lesson from experience. There is a temerity greater than that of displeasing political parties. It is possible to entail upon the South a worse catastrophe than a dissolution of the Union, even if it be accompanied by the ravages of war. There is such a thing as rending the ligaments of society! If, through a course of blind fatuity, we permit our enemies to thrust that

cursed event upon us, let the advocates of high price and monopoly remember, that while the rich man's slave, "clanking his manacles, will leap up to join the dreadful revelry," the poor man may be induced to recoil from the contest, thanking the fate which excluded him from the monopoly, and consoling himself with the delusion that *he*, at least has nothing to lose in the struggle.

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### No. 10.

"With all the readiness which self-interest induces, they have learned the arguments against limiting slavery and slave importation, from our mishaps, our acknowledgments of failure, from their own prosperity, and from our dependence upon them."—*London Times*.

"Unfortunately, the barbarism which reigns on that continent is exercised independently of all outside pressure. When an African chief does not sell his slaves, he kills them."—*Paris Constitutionnel*.

Under ordinary circumstances, labor will seek the best lands; but, under the pressure of high price, it must actually abandon those of inferior quality. And where a difference in the quality of land is strongly marked by geographical lines, one part having a preponderance of slave and the other of hiring labor, the natural competition between those systems is not only stimulated, but made *sectional*. This is an evil to be avoided at all times; but in the frontier Southern States, where the effect of *price* is most readily felt, and where abolition influence must have a more or less direct operation, this sectional feature of the competition is liable at any time to become *political*, and should be discouraged by every fair means.

It would astonish most Southern Legislatures for any member openly to declare himself an Abolitionist; wrath and indignation would be heaped upon him; yet for thirty years there have been Abolitionists in the Legislatures of some of the frontier States. Nobly as those States have battled in defense of Southern civilization, it must be plain to the impartial reader of their history that, after all, nothing has saved them from the Abolition crusade but the impossibility of peaceful emancipation. Even the new State of Missouri, which nearly severed the Union in 1820 that she might have slaves, already harbors in her metropolis an open, active and successful abolition party. For all this there is a ready explanation. The slaves of those States are owned by comparatively few, in distinct sections, and their labor is gradually supplanted by that of hirelings. What are the facts?\*

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\* The proportion of slaveholders to the white population of Maryland is 3.8 per cent, Virginia 6.2 per cent, Kentucky 5 per cent, and Missouri 3.2 per cent, according to the U. S. census for 1850.



The slave population of Delaware and Maryland has steadily diminished; that of Delaware, from nine to two thousand; and of these, three-fourths are in the southern county of Sussex. That of Maryland has decreased twenty-five per cent. in forty years; and at the present moment one-half are owned in the counties south of Baltimore and west of the Chesapeake, where the bulk of the tobacco crop is made; while the white population of these counties is but a tenth of the whole State, showing their weakness in the Legislature in the event of an abolition crisis.

In Virginia, though the slave population has not actually diminished, such is the combination of causes, that the comparative increase has been trifling; and now four-fifths of her slaves are east of the Blue Ridge, in an area of about a third of her territory, which though containing her chief cities, has but a third of her white population; showing again a minority in the Legislature. There are, perhaps, twenty counties in Western Virginia whose aggregate slave population is but *half* that of the little county of Surry, on James river, and scarcely exceeds that of Warwick. And when we reflect that there are but 6,000 slaves in the county of St. Louis, in Missouri, and more than 130,000 whites, who have assembled from every part of the Union and of the *world*, we need no longer be surprised at finding the metropolis of that large slave State in the clenched grasp of Abolitionists.

The immense preponderance of franchised hireling labor insures such a result, and nothing can avert it. It is impossible that it could have been avoided under the existing laws and circumstances of the country. The faithful and untiring opposition to the inroads of abolition which the border States have sustained during a long and harassing struggle entitle them to the highest praise from their more Southern sisters; yet it is vain to deny that, what with the thefts and influences of the Abolitionists rendering slave property insecure in the border counties on the one hand, and the growing demand for slaves in the more Southern States on the other, a diminution of direct and general interest in slavery *must* follow in those States, which the rest of the South cannot witness with indifference. The concentration of slaves in geographical sections is as little to be desired as their monopoly by individuals, *unless* in either case it be the result of natural causes; which is impossible until we have a *free trade in labor*, until the embargo on slave and the bonus on hireling labor are removed.

Here again I must ask not to be misunderstood. In alluding to a conflict between hireling and slave labor in this and previous letters, and in using the term "hireling," as I do, in contradistinction to slave, I mean no disparagement to the white man whom fate has consigned to even the humblest occupation. I am adverting to an undeniable fact, and comparing two essentially different systems of labor. Since this subject has been under discussion it has been urged that while it is desirable that slavery should be strengthened in every way, yet if slave labor should be cheapened, hireling

labor would be also. And the poor man, be he farmer or mechanic, would have smaller profits and would, *therefore*, be less able to purchase a slave. The proposition may be expressed in this way: The working man lives by his labor. If slave labor is cheapened or reduced in price, his income will also be reduced, and hence he will be less able to put up funds for the purchase of a slave. But this contains more than one fallacy. A reduction in the price of slaves, *if occasioned by the importation of Africans*, would be confined chiefly to slaves employed in agriculture, in household duties, or as yet untrained in mechanic arts. The wages of the working man would consequently not be materially reduced, because he is employed not in agriculture, nor in household affairs, but in the mechanic arts. Hence it is an error to say that a reduction in the price of slaves generally would be a reduction in his wages, *at least in the same proportion*. But suppose it were so that the wages of the white mechanic, for example, is reduced in the same proportion as the price of the slave on a cotton plantation. Must it not follow that other reductions of price will be experienced in every department? And will not the ability of the mechanic to accumulate money to buy a slave be the same in comparison with the price of the slave? Take a case. A carpenter wants to buy a negro girl to help his wife cook and wash, and he wants a negro boy to train up at his own trade, so that his son and his daughter as they grow, instead of being required to toil at the wash tub and the work bench and grow up in ignorance, may be allowed to go to school and obtain an education. With negroes selling at \$800, his wages amount to say \$1000. Now, if the price of negroes falls to \$400, the supposition in this case is that his wages will fall to \$500, (a monstrous supposition to be sure, but only made for the sake of argument.) *Every thing else must fall in the same proportion, or the argument does not hold.* Well, suppose he annually saved \$200 when his wages were \$1000. At the end of four years he could buy a slave for \$800, and at the end of four more he could buy another at the same price. He and his family then, at the end of eight years would be provided with two valuable servants. Now take the case of his reduced wages. With an income of \$500 he saves \$100 per annum for the specified purpose. Negroes selling at \$400, he will be enabled at the end of four years to buy one, and at the end of four more, another. He is hence, even under this absurd supposition, not the *less* able to purchase a slave from his reduction of wages, as some argue he would be. But the supposition is inadmissible. It is impossible that the wages of the white mechanic can fall from a thousand to five hundred dollars, because the price of slaves falls from eight hundred to four. And the conclusion is manifest that a reduction in the price of slaves not occasioning a *corresponding* (or not probably any) reduction of the wages of the white mechanic, so far from rendering him less able to buy a slave, increases his ability to do so. Facts sustain this conclusion. The price of slaves fluctuates more or less with the price of pro-

duce, but the working man's income is by no means as variable as the price of cotton. The experience of every community throughout the South will attest this. It is certain that no one would be more benefitted by a reduction in the price of slaves than the working man of the South. Let his trade be what it may, his journeymen and apprentices will include all the slaves he can afford to buy. Even at present high prices, every one acquainted with Southern affairs knows how invariably the working man buys slaves as his means increase, and how profitably he employs them in his own occupation to the great benefit of himself and his family.

The proposition then, that a reduction in the price of slaves, as a consequence of the importation of Africans, would injure the interests of the poorer class of white men at the South, is untenable. I am inclined to believe that quite a beneficial effect would follow. It was not, however, in this light simply that I have been viewing the contest between hireling and slave labor. I have had more particular allusion to the discriminating laws of the country which allow a great influx of one description of labor from abroad, and entirely forbids the other. This, I contend, is an odious discrimination which heaps incalculable injury upon the South, and operates as a bounty to the migrating labor of the Northern and European States, *which labor, be it ever remembered, nobody objects to hiring at the lowest possible wages!* While some are so infatuated with the idea that cheap slave labor would ruin the country, that the project of importing Africans is seriously regarded as the most hurtful to the South which could well be conceived.

But does it not appear strange that we desire a cheapening of everything we buy, *except slave labor*, without which we would have the means of buying nothing? It is very odd how we throw embarrassments around the very institution we are battling for. The laws of the country hold out every inducement to the immigration of hireling labor, but prohibit and denounce the importation of slaves. The result has been, in the course of half a century, to add nearly four millions of population to the hireling States *from abroad*. Here is a body of hireling labor sufficient to establish four large States of a million inhabitants each, while *we* have not received slave labor enough for the humblest farm, but, on the contrary, have had enough *stolen from us* to build the Pacific railroad. Is it not a contradiction, then, which appeals to us so constantly in behalf of Kansas? which urges upon us the great importance of extending our *area*, while that very extension, as long as the Slave Trade is prohibited, must comparatively diminish our labor at home?

Your correspondent yields to no one in appreciating the importance of an extension of territory, under the existing condition of our federal relations; but, be assured, the North can give us heavy odds and beat us at the game, so long as she receives 400,000 immigrants annually, and we not a single African to stake against them. The more territory we acquire, the greater is our



need of *more labor*. What would it profit the South to acquire the entire valley of the Amazon, and yet be prohibited from carrying labor there to reclaim and cultivate it? It is highly desirable that we should acquire territory. I, at least, would like to see our institutions spread over every acre of the continent, from Norfolk to Rio; but we want more than bare swamps, prairies, canebrakes and forests—we must have also sufficient labor to convert them into fruitful fields and habitable homes.

It would be well to review our position in this precarious game of putting new States on the chess-board, and calculate the chances of a checkmate. We may find the African Slave Trade a more essential element in the game than we have been in the habit of supposing. Is it not manifest that, without receiving slaves from Africa, we cannot cope, in the settling of territories, with the hireling States, which receive a monthly reinforcement of 30,000 peasants and artisans from Europe? Is any argument needed to prove this?

It is bad policy and false economy to grasp at territory with one hand and exclude labor from it with the other. Land is dead capital without labor. Which of us would buy up all the land in the neighborhood, and deliberately exclude the very labor for which we monopolize the soil? Yet this is the course the South is pursuing. We lavish our treasure in the purchase of territory, and exhaust our ingenuity in excluding labor. We want slave States formed out of the Territories of the United States; yet we render slaves so scarce, and their price so high, that most of the first settlers are unable to carry slaves with them. Emigrants are generally poor; and no poor man can give \$1,000 or \$1,500 for a slave to carry to Kansas, New Mexico, Oregon, California, or anywhere else.

Look at Kansas at this moment! With a population seeking admission into the Union, with "the DRED SCOTT decision" and a "pro-slavery" constitution; there are not more than three hundred slaves within her limits!\* But let a score of steamers, laden with slaves from Africa, ascend our Western rivers, and enter our Gulf and our Pacific ports, and land their laborers at the very door of the emigrant's cabin at the cost of two or three or four hundred dollars each, and, notwithstanding they are "*barbarians*," they will each find a "*border ruffian*" ready and able to subdue him, and put him to work. New England humanity would be forgotten; Northern capital would be invested in slaves; "Sharpe's rifles" would rust, and it is even possible the "shrieks for freedom" would become faint and sickly. Land speculations would revive, and the locations and sales would be unprecedented.

In the present condition of things, however, fellow-Southerners, it cannot be denied, *we are deficient in labor in the States, and powerless to supply the Territories in competition with the North.*

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\*These letters were written in February last, and therefore before the Kansas Compromise was effected in Congress.

We are loud in our demands for slave *States*, but sadly perverse in excluding *slaves*. A slave State without a goodly proportion of slaves can exist *only on parchment*. If we have *territory*, we must have *labor*, or it is worthless. Land cannot find labor when it is excluded by law, but in new countries labor will always find land. And this leads to a point of view to which your attention will be called in another letter.

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No. 11.

"It is not by preaching, or protesting, or threatening, or denouncing, that the objects of humanity can be attained."—  
*London Times.*

"In the colonies, the population is insufficient, and it never can be augmented by a European emigration."—  
*Paris Constitutionnel.*

It will hardly be contended that an over-production of cotton or other produce will be the consequence of a further increase in the productive power of the Southern States. Our soil supplies a part of the food and clothing consumed by a large portion of the civilized world, and that, too, at a comparatively lower price, and of a better quality than can be obtained elsewhere. The consumption of our staples increases so rapidly, that it has far surpassed our power to produce. Already, in the commercial emporiums of the world, is project added to project for an additional supply of cotton, and, as before mentioned, the cry for "*another America*" is the ominous indication of the inadequacy of our crops. Objections of this sort, then, to the importation of slaves, scarcely need serious refutation. The objection that the importation of slaves from Africa would occasion an over-production of cotton, reduce its price, and injure the agricultural interests of the country, is speculative, and not likely to prove well founded. A detailed consideration of it would require too much space, and hence but a few general observations will suffice. It should be borne in mind that *the demand for produce must always control the demand for labor*, hence the quantity of labor in requisition is determined by the quantity of produce needed for consumption; and that *cheap production is sure to increase and extend consumption*. Great as the increase of cotton culture has been here, its manufacture and consumption in Europe has increased more rapidly. It is impossible always to produce precisely the amount required for consumption. There will be more or less produced than is actually needed, generally more. But a slight surplus of such an article as cotton is sure, in the end, to induce an increased investment in manufactures, and an increased consumption of the fabrics. This has been the history of cotton ever since WHITNEY's invention of the gin, and there is no reason to suppose that

like causes will no longer effect like results. But not only does increased production beget increased consumption in point of *quantity*, it also extends the *area* of consumption, and calls new markets into being, besides extending and enlarging the old ones. And every new market opened will give a new impulse to the commerce of the country by opening a new channel of trade, and creating new demands for produce as well as manufactures, both abroad and at home. This is beneficial, not only commercially, but politically. Trade is peace. The dependence of one people upon another for their respective produce does more to preserve the peace of nations than perhaps all other causes. How great, then is the advantage to this country of increasing and extending the consumption of our produce among the nations of the earth, and thereby increasing and extending our commercial and political influence and power, and securing peace! If the price of cotton falls, as a consequence of importing labor, it must not be forgotten that the *cost of producing it* will have fallen also; and cheap production is the aim of all men and all countries, in all pursuits. No reason has yet been assigned why the production of cotton should be an exception.

I will now cite, from official sources, the effect produced by high price and costly production, from which the effect of low price and cheap production may be inferred.

From the report of Mr. CLAIBORNE, the commissioner sent by this government to Europe, in 1857, to collect information relative to the consumption of cotton, the following facts are derived: He noticed at Rouen and at Ghent, two of the largest manufacturing emporiums on the continent, evidence of an increase in the consumption of East India cotton, and "*the reason assigned was, the very high price of American cotton, which compelled the spinners to look for other supplies.*" "At Rouen, particularly, the high price of American cotton was complained of by the mill owners, and, as a consequence of it, I was told that, on an estimated consumption of 140,000 bales, for 1857, in the departments of *La Seine Imperieure*, *L'Eure*, and *Orne* at least 15,000 would be of East Indian growth. Some of the spinners there had begun to spin East India cotton unmixed" with the American staple as heretofore.

Mr. DE HEMPTIEME, an extensive spinner of Ghent, "consumes East India cotton exclusively, which he converts into yarns from No. 4 to 18. Delivered at the mill, it costs about 6d. per pound, and he thinks its consumption will rapidly increase in Belgium, as American cotton has reached so high a price."

"The annual consumption in the mills belonging to Mr. KUNZ, in the canton of Zurich, Switzerland, is between 6 and 7,000 bales of raw cotton, having diminished somewhat under the great rise in prices."

Mr. KLUGKIST, President of the Chamber of Commerce at Bremen, writes to Mr. CLAIBORNE, "So far, the United States has been the country which supplied the cotton, but owing to its increasing



value, efforts are making to get supplies from the East Indies, and this year about 20 per cent. of the imports will be Surat cotton. It is not as good, but manufacturers are compelled to resort to it, by the high rates of the North American cotton.

A member of the largest cotton importing house in Russia assured Mr. CLAIBORNE "it was not unlikely that some who were engaged in cotton spinning without ever having had the necessary capital, would have to succumb under increasing competition and high prices."

With respect to the future consumption of raw cotton in Europe, the observation of the chief manager of one of the largest mills in St. Petersburg is applicable throughout the continent:—"He regarded the prospect for its increase in Russia as very good, and on this point expressed some solicitude as to the capacities of our cotton-growing States to keep up with the increasing demand throughout the civilized world for that raw material."

The following prices will give a correct idea of the comparative value of American and other cottons:

In Saxony, when Americas are worth 16 cents, Surats are worth 11 cents.					
In Bremen, " " " 15 " " 10 "					
In Russia, " " " 10 rubles pr poond, Asiatics bring 6 @ 7 cts.					
In Switzerland, " " " 25 cts pr Swiss pound, Egyptians bring 25 "					

Most staples are inferior to American, and hence sell at a lower price; but when American cotton exceeds a certain price, other staples are more profitably worked up, and are made to supply its place wherever it is possible.

An idea of the rate at which the consumption of cotton of all descriptions has increased as prices decreased on the continent, and how it will increase if the supply is kept up at a moderate price, may be formed from the following facts:

In France, in 1816, a kilograme of raw cotton sold for \$1.12; in 1851 it sold for 28 cents, and similar rates prevailed in other parts of Europe.

The annual average amount of raw cotton imported by France, between 1827 and 1836, was 73,625,200 lbs. The amount imported in 1856, was 225,067,600 lbs.

Great Britain imported, in 1821, 168,000,000 lbs; in 1855, 862,000,000 lbs; and in 1857, over 900,000,000 lbs.

Russia imported, in 1826, 2,673,600 lbs; and in 1852, 62,940,400 lbs.

Bremen imported, in 1852, 9,470,400 lbs; and in 1856, 45,539,500 lbs.

Hamburg imported, in 1848, 17,776,200 lbs; and in 1855, 47,083,400 lbs.

Zolverein imported in 1847, 40,326,400 lbs; and in 1855, 118,820,500.

The importation of raw cotton into Austria, in 1856, exceeded that of 1855, by 15,553,000 pounds. That of Belgium increased from 22,000,000 to nearly 27,000,000 in five years ending with 1855, and the actual *consumption* of cotton wool in Sardinia in

creased during the same period from 7,200,000 lbs, to nearly 10,000,000 lbs.

But although the consumption of cotton in Europe *has* increased so rapidly, there are some quarters where it is still comparatively but little used, and it will continue to increase with even greater rapidity, if the production of it is materially extended by the importation of slaves, and a reasonable reduction in its price ensues. Trade, like water, seeks a level, and all artificial obstacles are barriers to the growth, wealth, and prosperity of nations. There may be no ground for fears of a rival in the production of cotton, but there is every reason why we should wish to increase and extend its consumption as the demand for the fabrics increases. We hold a mortgage upon the good will of every people who consume our produce.

In previous letters, the slave trade has been viewed simply as the importation of so much labor as may be needed; and there can be little doubt as to the benefit which would result from such an increase in our productive industry. But besides importing labor, we would be importing *population* also, the barbarism of which is certainly an objection.

The two most prominent objections seem to be, that African barbarians would be unmanageable under our mild treatment, and inefficient as laborers; and, secondly, that a redundancy of population would result. It would certainly be desirable to import enlightened and trained slaves, rather than barbarians. Any one would prefer an *Æsop* to a cannibal. But *Æsops* do not abound in Africa, the only country from which we can import. And, if we cannot get an *Æsop*, we must needs take a cannibal, or do without. The question then arises, Shall we do without more slaves, or shall we have cannibals? Much is to be said on this point, much more than your correspondent will now venture upon. But it does seem clear that the objection of barbarism and cannibalism cannot be as forcible *now* as it may have been in our colonial times. And we are all *living evidences* of the fact, that the inconvenience of having to convert a savage into a civilized man has been abundantly recompensed by the advantages and profits of his labor and that of his descendants.

In former days, when slaves were imported, our negro population was not as advanced in civilization as at present. The bulk of our slaves were either native Africans or their immediate descendants; and yet, even amid that "mass of barbarians" the security of "isolated families" was complete. "After filling our fair land with "hideous barbarians," as eloquently expressed by another, our fathers did not find a "barren result." The result was *pregnant!* pregnant with wealth, prosperity, and independence. Cotton, "*cheap cotton*," was no "lame" nor "impotent conclusion." Cotton was no new thing in the world, but "*cheap cotton*" was what the world wanted. We supplied the want; *the want increases*, and hence our need of more barbarians. We have now nearly 4,000,000 native American slaves, and the annual in-

terspersed of a few thousand Africans among them can do no harm. The fear of *insubordination* as a consequence of importation, seems to be not only unfounded, but sickly. It would come with a very bad grace from a Southern community to plead such a fear. It is the general impression, and is acknowledged as well by the slaves as his master that there is nothing our negroes are bad enough to attempt, which we are not powerful enough to frustrate and punish. No successful rebellion of negroes has ever occurred in the United States. Local outbreaks happen in all ages and countries. Mobs, anarchy, and violence are much more frequent in hireling than in slave countries. And every occasion of the kind in the Southern States has been directly traced to outside influence—to the hostility of the Spaniards in our early colonial times, and to the so-called religious instruction of abolition incendiaries, and the mad zeal of political demagogues more recently. But such Heaven-offending treachery, “though it walks only in the gloom of midnight, and shows its dark and dangerous brow at that dead hour, so suited to its machinations, will always be detected; nor can the most elaborate ingenuity hide it from prevention.” No! This fear, if indeed it has any real existence, is the bantling of abolition. Rebellion! It is the most difficult of human achievements! It requires a rare combination of still rarer qualities, and these, too, stimulated by flagrant oppression, even for its conception.

May not, then, six millions of Southern freemen, with arms in their hands, and of a vastly superior race, safely venture upon the mastership of a few thousand Africans, in addition to the humble, ignorant, contented, and unarmed slaves already in their possession? Neither the “horrors of St. Domingo,” nor the treachery of the “Sicilian vespers” will ever be imported from Africa. If they impend at all, they are fostered *much nearer home*; aye, even on the floor of the American Senate, and in the hall of the nation’s representatives. The incense of insurrection and massacre burns only on those appropriate altars; the bloody hand of treason lurks behind the pillars of the capitol, and the dreadful war-cry is ready to be chanted under its roof.

But *redundancy* is dreaded. Counting only upon the natural increase of our slave population, a redundancy has been seriously feared. This must be delusive. Why, it will require the lapse of ages for redundancy to ensue on this continent! I say on this *continent*, because no one portion of it is destined to have a redundant population while others are but sparsely peopled, particularly in the tropical and semi-tropical latitudes. Expansion and absorption by means of purchase, annexation, migration, conquest, or otherwise, is the established rule of American progress. Nothing can check it. There is soil and resource enough on the American continent for the combined populations of Europe and Africa; and until we reach the density existing in some of the European States, we need not begin to calculate the chances of redundancy. The inviolable laws of nature regulate the growth



of population the same as they control other departments of creation, and they will work out their results despite either of human fear or opposition. Throw speculation aside, and look at actual results! The census tells you that in sixty years our slave population has been more than quadruplicated. Is there anything alarming in this? Our white population has not been stationary during all this time. Our territory, produce, and general wealth have increased space, and there is yet no approach to redundancy.

In the year 1800, before the acquisition of Louisiana, Florida, Texas, and part of the Mexican dominions, the territory of the United States comprised about 788,000 square miles, and the population was 5,300,000, or  $6\frac{2}{3}$  per mile. In 1850, the one had increased to 3,000,000, and the other to 23,000,000, showing a density of but  $7\frac{2}{3}$  per mile. Thus, in fifty years the proportion of population to territory increased but one inhabitant per mile. The proportion of exports to population shows a like result, and redundancy is as far off as ever.

But, to confine ourselves to the States whose slave population is on the increase, excluding Delaware and Maryland, and all the Territories, what is the result of a half century? In 1800, these States had about 372,000 square miles, to a population of 2,210,400, or 6 per mile. In 1850, they had 900,000 square miles, and 8,938,400 inhabitants, or  $9\frac{1}{2}$  per mile, showing the rate of increase in the proportion to be but 1 per cent. per annum. Whether this is too rapid an approach to redundancy, is readily answered. While we boast but ten inhabitants to the mile, what is the proportion subsisting in some of the European States? In Great Britain and Ireland it is 225; in France it is 172; in Prussia 151; in Austria 141; in Spain 78; in Turkey 73; and in Russia, with its frozen wastes, about 30. When, therefore the great fertility of our soil is considered, we may safely set ourselves down as in no very immediate danger of redundancy.

Since 1830, our average annual production of cotton has increased from 1,000,000 to over 3,000,000 bales; and as to other productions of the soil and domestic resources, we have a standing herd of 36,000,000 cattle, sheep, and swine, and slaughter for food \$52,000,000 worth of these annually. With but 26,000,000 acres under actual cultivation, in 1850, our crop was 215,000,000 pounds of rice, 335,000,000 bushels of corn, 23,000,000 bushels of wheat, and 44,000,000 bushels of potatoes, to say nothing of other grain and provisions. To this was added 240,000,000 pounds of sugar, and 12,000,000 gallons of molasses for the sweetening, and over 160,000,000 pounds of tobacco to put in our pipes. With these facts before him, the candor of any one will decide whether the annual introduction of a few thousand Africans into this bountiful region, *not a twentieth part of which is under actual cultivation*, is calculated to bring redundancy upon us.

If our population were *eight-fold denser*, the proportion would be less than half that of France. It may be time then to discuss

the prospects of redundancy. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Existing evils are sufficient. Imaginary ones altogether superfluous. If we put our house in order in this our day and generation, a remote posterity may be induced to emulate the example. The acknowledged evil of our day is a deficiency of labor to cultivate the earth, and it will tax our utmost endeavors to remedy it. The evil of some far distant day *may* be redundancy, but by that time our offspring will have secured the world for a market-place, and all mankind for customers.

With these views, fellow-Southerners, and the many others necessarily suggesting themselves, it is for you to decide whether any insurmountable obstacle to the importation of African labor exists in the Southern States. If you really believe the importation is *needed*, it is to be hoped it will be perseveringly and determinedly sought after, without subterfuge, until it shall be accomplished before the world in open day. It may be necessary to begin by importing "emigrants;" if so, let them be hired for *life*, as they were in the colony of Georgia, and not for fifteen or any other term of years. *Do the thing boldly.*

It would perhaps be as well for me to leave off at this point, and relieve your attention, which is doubtless tired. But there are considerations relating to our treaty obligations respecting the slave trade which claim the serious attention of every citizen of the United States—an attention which is more pressingly demanded every day. To these I will briefly refer in a few additional letters. In the meantime a single word in relation to the act punishing the importation of slaves with *death!* It will be found just as inoperative at the South as the fugitive slave law is at the North. No American citizen will ever be hanged on Southern soil for *buying* negroes until a few are hung at the North for *stealing* them. Piracy "on the high seas" is one thing—piracy on parchment is quite another. And if ever a case is made south of the Potomac, the difference will be duly manifested.

"They have the law of nations on their side, and may quote it in answer to any assertion of our rights to interfere in the cause of humanity. They are free nations, and Africa is a free coast. Negroes are necessary to raise the cotton, sugar, coffee, and tobacco, which the world wants. \* \* Unless the African be used as a laborer, the fairest regions of the New World must remain a desert."—*London Times*.

"Our Government, having recognized emigration as at once useful and moral, has authorized traders to engage laborers in Asia and Africa for the French Colonies. Up to the present time, Asia has furnished a very small number of laborers. Will the supply be more abundant in future? We know not. India is not a French Colony."—*Paris Constitutionnel*.

This is true. We have the law of nations on our side. Chancellor KENT says: "Declaring the crime piracy does not make it so." The Supreme Court declared, in the case of the *Antelope*, that "a trade could not be considered as contrary to the law of nations, which had been authorized and protected by the usages and laws of all commercial nations." The British High Court of Admiralty, on the appeal in the case of *Le Louis*, decided that the right of visitation and search, on the high seas, did not exist in time of peace. Lord STOWELL held, in this case, that "no nation could exercise the right of visitation and search upon the commerce and unappropriated parts of the ocean, except upon the belligerent claim. No one nation had a right to force its way to the liberation of Africa, by trampling on the independence of other States; or to procure eminent good by means that are unlawful; or to press forward to a great principle by breaking through other great principles that stand in the way. THE RIGHT OF VISITATION AND SEARCH DID NOT EXIST IN TIME OF PEACE. *If it belonged to one nation it belonged to all, and would lead to gigantic mischief and universal war.* Other nations had refused to accede to the British proposal of a reciprocal right to search in the African seas, and it would require an express convention to give the right of search in time of peace." Sir ROBERT PEEL "entirely and utterly disclaimed" the right of search, and added: "If we know that an American vessel were furnished with all the materials requisite for the slave trade, still we would be bound to let that American vessel pass on." And Lord ABERDEEN assured Mr. EVERETT that "the British cruisers are not instructed to detain American vessels under any circumstances whatever; on the contrary, they are ordered to abstain from all interference with them, be they slaves or otherwise." Besides, "Africa is a free coast;" it is not, like India, a British colony.

Being assured, then, on the one hand, of the necessity for more slaves, and the consequent importance of their importation, and, on the other, that we have the law of nations and the decision of British courts and ministers on our side, it remains to inquire into the treaty of stipulations existing between the United States and Great Britain. To appreciate fully the bearing of this alliance, it is necessary to understand its origin and progress. That it



originated in the prevailing abolition sentiment of former days, could, if necessary, be shown from unquestionable evidence. The abolition of the slave trade was conceived and accomplished as a leading element in the general scheme of emancipation, both in England and America; albeit Southern men, under the delusion of their times, lent themselves to the measure. Of course, then, the *alliance* between these countries must be the same in its nature and origin. A brief summary of historical facts will explain everything.

This alliance was originally proposed by the British Government, and, as it now stands, there is not an American feature in it. It is a British scheme of half a century's standing. The incipient step was taken as early as 1806, as appears from the 24th article of the treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation between the two Governments, signed at London on the 31st of December, 1806, and from the despatch of the American negotiators, Messrs. MONROE and WM. PINCKNEY, to the State Department, dated 3d of January, 1807. The article need not be reproduced. The despatch proceeds to say: "The 24th article engages that the parties shall communicate to each other the laws which their respective legislatures may enact for the abolition or limitation of the African slave trade, and that they will also use their best endeavors to procure the co-operation of other Powers for the complete abolition of that trade. \* \* \* Mr. Fox had taken great interest in this question, and it is understood that, *in suggesting the idea*, in the address of the House of Commons to the King, of obtaining the co-operation of other Powers, the United States were held particularly in view. The British Commissioners proposed the article, and showed great desire that we should agree to it. As this stipulation was not comprised within the scope of our instructions, we have thought it our duty to explain to you the cause to which its admission into the treaty is to be attributed."

It was doubtless out of this stipulation that the tenth article of the treaty of Ghent sprung, seven years after. The ideas and phraseology of the two are similar; "humanity and justice" being the talismanic words in each. The whole proceeding was a stroke of British policy, and it matters not who was spokesman on the occasion. This article was but the natural consequence of its forerunner. The project of a closer alliance, however, like all other British Abolition schemes, soon took root in this country. A *colonization society* was organized within three years! But let me ask pardon in advance. I've nothing against the *members* of this society, and don't want any of them to get vexed with me. I only wish, in common with a large portion of the Southern people, that they had never associated, and, moreover, that they would now wind up as soon as possible. African liberty will not be cradled in Liberia.

"Freedom is  
The brilliant gift of Heav'n, 'tis reason's self,  
The kin of deity."

The original object of this association, we all know, was to transport the free negroes of Virginia and Maryland, and other States, to Africa; but its practical operation is now complained of as "tenfold more in furtherance of the emancipation of slaves for deportation to Africa, than of removing the negroes previously free," and as productive of no other result than a large increase in the number of *post obit* emancipations. Be this as it may, it is certain that early in 1817 the society began to assume the charge of the slave trade. The committee of the Federal House of Representatives, to whom their petition was referred, reported two resolutions—one calling on the Executive to negotiate treaties for "the entire and immediate abolition of the traffic in slaves," and the other to obtain the consent of England to the transportation of "free negroes" from the United States to Sierra Leone. Neither of the propositions, however, was acted upon at the time. During the next session of Congress, the same committee recommended that the President be requested to "take measures for procuring suitable territory in Africa for colonizing free people of color, with their own consent," and that armed vessels should occasionally be sent to Africa, for the purpose of interrupting the slave trade. These, also, were not adopted; but in 1819 the "act in addition to the acts prohibiting the Slave Trade" was passed, and \$100,000 appropriated to carry it into effect. To convey an idea of the operation of this act, it is sufficient to state, upon the authority of the report of the Secretary of the Navy for 1830, that during the ten years previous, 250 "recaptured negroes" were carried to Liberia, *and settled there*, at an expense to the Government of \$264,710, or an average of \$1,047 each! Dear humanity, this.

In 1820, the act declaring the slave trade piracy was passed. At this session, also, the Colonization Society was incorporated, and in response to a memorial from it, the President was finally requested, by resolution, "to negotiate with foreign Powers for an entire and immediate abolition of the slave trade," and an ineffectual effort was again made to appropriate the use of naval vessels to the objects of the Colonization Society. At this juncture began the train of events which resulted in the treaty of Washington. Nor had the British Government been idle in the meantime.

In 1818, it was proposed by Lord CASTLEREAGH, I think, that the British and American Governments should concede "to each other's ships-of-war a qualified right of search, with a power of detaining the vessels of either State, with slaves actually on board." This was refused; but let it be borne in mind, the proposition came from England a year before the act of 1819, and two years before the famous piracy act of 1820. In 1819, Parliament sent a petition to the Prince Regent for a renewal of "his beneficent endeavors, more especially with the Governments of France and the United States of America, for the effectual attainment of an object we all profess to have in view." The matter remained in

suspense two years, when it was again opened by the British Minister at Washington, (early in 1823,) who called on the Secretary of State either to assent to the plan of search and detention proposed by his Government, or to suggest a better one. This elicited the following resolution from the House of Representatives :

"That the President of the United States be requested to enter upon and prosecute, from time to time, such negotiations with the several maritime Powers of Europe and America as he may deem expedient, for the effectual abolition of the African slave trade, and its ultimate denunciation as piracy under the law of nations, by the consent of the civilized world."

In keeping with which the Secretary proposed to the British Minister, in reply, that his Government should adopt the piracy plan likewise, as preferable to that of search. *Thus had each Government thirty-five years ago laid down its own distinct proposition : the one clinging to the halter as the shortest remedy, the other preferring a chase as the surest.*

### No. 13.

"In fine, negroes must be had at any cost; and no nation has a right to impose its own scrupulosity on other free communities. If England has ruined her own colonies, that is no reason why she should seek to check the progress of the whole American continent. \* \* \* In some form, or under some pretext, the slave owners of the other hemisphere will again attempt to obtain a supply of negroes from the coast of Africa."—*London Times*.

"As for China, it is so distant that we cannot look to it for emigrants. \* \* \* But Africa continues to be the source whence the colonies first drew their laboring population. It is convenient to our American possessions. Its inhabitants are gentle, robust, sociable, and inclined to agricultural pursuits. Then, in addition to this, they are oppressed, and subject to the horrors of perpetual anarchy in their own country."—*Paris Constitutionnel*.

In my last letter it was shown that the American and British governments had widely different views as to the most effectual method of suppressing the slave trade. Both turned out to be impracticable! The British government did not immediately enter into the piracy scheme. But while acknowledging the great advantage to the cause of abolition, of a general denunciation of the slave trade, still clung to the "right of search." And the British minister again submitted that a limited right of search, under regulations mutually agreed to, was the only practical course; adding that if the policy was doubtful it could be adhered to only for a limited time, and if found objectionable it could be abandoned. This occasioned a deeper interest in the negotiation, and a longer delay. The "Panama mission" was, at the



same time, a subject of deep interest in the country. In the meantime the President of the United States, in pursuance of the resolution of the House of Representatives, already quoted, invited the several maritime powers concerned to enter into the desired negotiations, preliminary to a general declaration that the slave trade shall be piracy under the law of nations. The enormity of the farce, however, was too glaring to command the serious attention of any except Great Britain and the new republic of Colombia.

Negotiation with the British government was resumed. It was proposed that Parliament should impose the penalty of death, as pirates, upon all British subjects engaged in the traffic. And, if I am not mistaken, an act of the sort was passed at the next session of Parliament. This is the only point the American government succeeded in obtaining British assent to in the whole affair; no very great triumph, to be sure, and, so far as it affects the law of nations, (the end to which American policy was aiming,) it was simply worthless. The Queen's Bench might hang a thousand British subjects for buying negroes; yet the law of nations would remain unchanged. But it was further proposed on the part of the British government, that the naval vessels of the two countries should have the mutual right of search *only on the coasts of Africa, America and the West Indies*, those which were alone supposed to be infested by the newly-made pirates under municipal law, or perhaps they may be more properly called "latter-day" pirates. A treaty was duly negotiated on this basis. The whole middle and southern Atlantic ocean was to be scoured by the British navy, with the Gulf of Mexico and the Mediterranean for head quarters, *vis-a-vis*. It was an excellent way of empowering the British flag with the police of the high seas; but, for once, the fates were adverse, and the project failed.

At that time the American Senate was a grave, illustrious, and patriotic body, reflecting the wisdom of the country. And when this treaty was submitted to them, they hesitated to ratify it. They doubted. The President urged them in a confidential message. A single sentence of it, though intended for another purpose, strikingly illustrates the false position in which the country was placed by the piracy project in general, and the piratical act of 1820 in particular. He said to the Senate: "*To invite all nations, with the statute of piracy in our hands, to adopt its principles as the law of nations, and yet to deny to all the common rights of search for the pirate, whom it would be impossible to detect without entering and searching the vessel, would expose us not simply to the charge of inconsistency,*" the additional word, *stupidity*, being possibly held in mental reservation, through deference to the august body he addressed. The Senate, at length, amended the treaty so materially as to cause its defeat. The amendments were, that the American coast should be excluded from the list of those where the search should be allowed; that chartered vessels and vessels owned by citizens of either nation should be excluded

from the class liable to be searched; that the citizens or subjects of either party trading under foreign flags should be exempt from the penalties of the treaty; and that either party might terminate the treaty at any time, on giving six months' notice.

The latter-day pirates were thus already at a discount. It would be interesting to know, how many have paid the fearful penalty at the hands of unrelenting philanthropy? The British government of course objected to the amendments, and, *as a compromise, had the assurance to propose that the right of search on the American coast should be restricted to the coast of the SOUTHERN STATES!* The Northern ports were to be free, and the Southern, tainted already with the pollution of slavery, were to be under the espionage of the despised and hated British flag. The American minister at London immediately rejected the proposition, and the treaty fell to the ground. A similar treaty with Colombia met the same fate.

The apparent inconsistency in the course of the Federal Government, just narrated, it is perhaps well to explain. The resolution calling on the Executive to negotiate, with a view of rendering the slave trade piracy under the law of nations, was simply declaratory of the individual sentiments of a majority in the House of Representatives. Nothing more. But that body, it must be remembered, has no voice in the making of treaties, and cannot instruct or advise the treaty-power either as to the subject or the nature of the stipulations it should enter into. And, with however much reason the President may have regarded the resolution as an expression of the public wish, it could have no obligatory effect whatever with the Senate, which has the sole power of ratifying or rejecting treaties. This apparent inconsistency, then, was really nothing more than a difference of opinion between the Senate and the House of Representatives, which is by no means an unusual circumstance. It was made conspicuous in this instance because the President negotiated upon a suggestion of the House of Representatives, counting "without his host"—the Senate.

This was a critical period in the diplomatic history of the United States, and the Senate "deserves well of the country" for the wise and statesman-like views which signalized its counsels. Unfortunately, these views, with the men who expressed them, have departed, and "cabal, intrigue, and corruption," now rule the day.

And here it is well to observe, that the forming of alliances with foreign powers for the suppression of the slave trade, or for any other purpose, is by no means "the settled policy of the country," whatever may be said of the abolition of the traffic by act of Congress. This is readily substantiated. Among the subjects proposed in the invitation to our Government to send a mission to Panama, was "the consideration of means to be adopted for the entire abolition of the African slave trade." The committee of the Senate to whom the proposition was referred, reported

(in 1826) that "*the United States have not the right, and ought never to feel the inclination to dictate to others who may differ with them on this subject, (the slave trade,) nor do the committee see the expediency of insulting other States by ascending the moral chair and pronouncing from thence mere abstract principles of the rectitude of which each nation enjoys the perfect right of deciding for itself.*" This able report was written by Mr. TAZEVELL, of Virginia; and on the committee were, besides him, Mr. MACON, of North Carolina, Mr. GAILLARD, of South Carolina, and Mr. WHITE, of Tennessee—four of the ablest and most highly respected Senators from the South. In defending the report, Mr. WHITE very opportunely called attention to the fact, that, in the constitutions of some of the republics to be represented at Panama, it was declared, "that whoever owns a slave shall cease to be a citizen." How improper, then, he asked, would it not be to treat with them in relation to slavery? "*Let us cease,*" he added, "*to negotiate upon any subject connected with it!*" The remark is even more strictly applicable to the queen power of abolition, Great Britain! *Her* laws also forbid any citizen in any part of the world to own a slave. Mr. WHITE uttered a truth far more reaching, perhaps, even than he intended. It amounts to a political axiom; it indicates a policy too evident to be mistaken. Mr. HAYNE, of South Carolina, urged it in general terms: "*With nothing connected with slavery can we consent to treat with foreign nations!*" This should be "the settled policy of the South." We now see our error in consenting to "*treat*" with the Northern States on the subject when the federal compact was made, and our error again in treating with England in 1814 and in 1842. The British alliance has provision for its own termination; let us break it up. Which of our Senators will propose it?

That "the settled policy of the country" was *then* adverse to a slave-trade-abolition alliance is further evidenced by the note of Mr. CLAY, when Secretary of State, closing a negotiation with (I think) the Melbourne ministry, in which he assures the British Government that, "from the views entertained by the Senate, it would seem unnecessary and inexpedient any longer to continue the negotiation respecting the slave convention, with any hope that it can assume a form satisfactory to both parties." And so satisfied were all parties of the truth of Mr. CLAY's conclusion, that it was currently announced in the British press more than ten years after, and, I may add, currently believed at those European courts which took any interest in the matter, that "under no condition, in no form, and with no restriction, will the United States enter into any convention, or treaty, or combined efforts of any sort or kind with other nations, for the suppression of this trade." This was the prevailing belief in 1836. It was then, however, that abolition reared its polluted head with renewed vigor in the United States. The British societies established *branches* in New England, and sent preachers to expound their doctrines. A new crusade was organized, and all the British



Government had to do was to *wait*, until "the views entertained by the Senate" should be changed. This was effectually done in six years. And before the close of 1842, the ASHBURTON alliance was a thing accomplished, Southern Senators sustaining it, a full conception of which we can now form from the chain of events thus briefly narrated.

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#### No. 14.

"The Colonies are perishing for want of sufficient labor. By additional supplies alone can the principle of free labor in the tropics be vindicated, and a real blow struck at the iniquities against which we have long declaimed."—*London Times*.

"The conventions relative to the right of search have been suppressed. Engagements entered into since then abandoned. The treaties of 1815, containing declarations against the slave trade, have nothing in common with an emigration based on the enfranchisement of the slave."—*Paris Constitutionnel*.

I am induced to believe, fellow Southerners, that there is no material difference of opinion among us as to the expediency of abrogating the articles in the treaty of Washington relating to the slave trade. *This proposition is entirely distinct from and independent of the proposition to repeal the acts prohibiting the importation of slaves.* Let it be remembered that importation was prohibited thirty-four years before the treaty was thought of, and had been declared piracy twenty-two years before. No negroes were imported into the United States, and nobody thought of importing them at the time; so that in the outset we must distinguish between the two propositions. Let us also remember that this treaty aims avowedly, literally and exclusively at the prevention of the slave trade between *foreign countries*, and not in this country. A mere perusal of the articles, and a general knowledge of the state of the trade in 1842, is sufficient to convince any one of this.

Let me, however, on the threshold of this subject, distinctly avow the entire absence of any intention or desire either to question or impugn the motives of any American citizen who had any official connection either with the negotiation or the ratification of the treaty. If WASHINGTON, JEFFERSON and MADISON, being mortal, could for once be in error, as in my first letter I contended they had been, surely the statesmen of 1842, illustrious as many of them certainly were, could also fall into a blunder, particularly in the matter of a treaty with Great Britain whose diplomatists are trained to their profession. Look at the CLAYTON-BULWER treaty! With my disclaimer thus made in advance, your attention is now invited to the following points, which, without being formally discussed, are submitted for your consideration:

The eighth article of the treaty is an experiment. Witness Mr. WEBSTER's query to Captains BELL and PAINE, of the navy, dated April 30th, 1842, viz: "*What number of vessels, and of what size and description, it would be necessary to employ on the western coast of Africa, in order to put an entire end to the traffic in slaves, and for what number of years it would probably be necessary to maintain such force to accomplish that purpose.*" Also, the foot note at page 291, vol. 6, WEBSTER's Works, Boston, 1851, edited by himself, viz: a detailed answer was returned, and, upon the information which it contained, the eighth article of the treaty of Washington was drawn up. Also, the eleventh article of the treaty, providing for the termination of the eighth at the end of five years. The idea evidently being the same as that entertained by the British minister in 1823, when he submitted that if the policy of allowing a mutual right of search was doubtful, it could be adhered to only for a limited time; and the same as that actuating the Senate, when the proposed treaty of that year was so amended that either party might terminate it any time on giving six month's notice, both of which are mentioned in my last letter.

The experiment has failed. Witness the experience of fifteen years, and the evidence of everybody informed on the subject.

The stipulation entails an unnecessary expense on the country. According to Mr. BENTON, in his speech in the Senate (1842) it would cost \$720,000 per annum to maintain a force of 80 guns on the coast of Africa: this, in fifteen years, would amount to \$10,800,000—a fine sum to offer up on the altar of British philanthropy, while it is considered too great an expense to add a few companies to our own army, for the defense of our Indian frontiers. It was truly said, at the time, "We raise 1,000 men for foreign service, while reducing our little army at home! We send ships to the coast of Africa, while dismounting our dragoons on the frontiers of Missouri and Arkansas! We protect Africa from slave dealers, and abandon Florida to savage butchery! We cry out for retrenchment, and scatter \$3,600,000 (five years' cost of the African squadron) at one broad cast of the hand!"

What becomes of the few negroes that chance to fall into the hands of a cruiser? Let the archives of the Navy Department, the State Department and the Colonization Society, tell, that we may know how many martyrs have been rescued by these \$10,000,000, and how much they have cost per head. Which of our worthy Senators will call for this information? It requires a glance at only fifteen years' files, and a few clerks can accomplish it in a week.

The alliance certainly was not intended to last forever, and if in fifteen years it has not accomplished anything, it never will. It is certain, from the whole history of the negotiations on the subject, already referred to, that had the alliance been the sole object of Lord ASHBURTON's visit to America, it would not have been ratified by the Senate, at least with as large a vote from the South,

as, under the circumstances, it received. It did not pass upon its own merits.

It is, after all, a dodge, a shift from the real issue; and what a shift! Simply the horn of a dilemma. Mr. WEBSTER, the American negotiator, was candid enough to acknowledge it, in 1843, and again in 1846. "The stipulation," he says, "was a mode resorted to which *might* render unnecessary both the assertion and the denial of the right to search." \* \* \* "The whole proceeding shows that the object of the stipulation was to *avoid* such differences and disputes as had already arisen." It was made to avoid "raising the difficulty attending the question of the right of search." There can be no doubt of this. The real issue was the British claim of a right to search American vessels for the latter-day pirates. And the whole scope and object of the eighth article was to dodge it, even at an expense of \$700,000 per annum, which, so far as the settlement of the issue is concerned, is just so much hush-money.

It has not prevented British cruisers from searching and detaining American vessels on the high seas. Witness the American barque *Panchita*, with an American crew engaged in lawful commerce, seized by the British sloop *Sappho* and sent to New York in charge of a British *prize* officer and crew! Also the American ship *Thomas Watson*, laden with palm oil, ivory, gums, hides and gold dust, seized by the British steamship *Bloodhound*, and forcibly carried into the British colony of Sierra Leone in charge of a prize crew, for the unpardonable crime of having a negro steward on board! Also the fifty searches recently off our own coast. And, as a fit commentary, witness the UNITED STATES FRIGATE CUMBERLAND striking her own colors, and sneaking up behind the little Yankee schooner *Cortez*, WITH THE BRITISH FLAG AT HER PEAK! only to discover that the schooner was a legitimate trader. What a settlement of the "right of search!" *O tempora! O mores!* But *can* this be true? Can it be possible that American fanaticism is willing to truckle so low under the behests of this British alliance? It surely cannot be the custom with American vessels of war to sport the British flag along the coast of Africa. There was a time when the meanest cabin boy would spurn the subterfuge.

But, to proceed. Is this political alliance in keeping with the spirit of the Constitution and the established policy of the Government? It avails nothing to say that it was sanctioned by the country; "there is never so much danger of unconstitutional legislation as when measures are proposed to which nobody objects." It is so with every department of a constitutional government. Unanimous consent and constitutional authority are widely different sources of power, whether the act be legislative or diplomatic. Besides, then, the fact that the eighth and ninth articles of this treaty make up together a political alliance contrary to the settled policy of the country, and is based upon the repudiated fallacy that "the traffic in slaves is irreconcilable with the principles of



humanity and justice," I submit, with entire deference, that it is not constitutional; because the treaty power can derive no authority to prevent the importation of slaves *out of* the authority granted negatively to Congress so to do. One Congress may prohibit and the next may permit. One can repeal the act of the other. But a *treaty*, especially an *ALLIANCE*, is an affair between foreign powers, and is altogether different in its nature and objects. And, further, because the treaty power not only derives no authority in this case out of the authority granted to Congress, but is *by that very grant* deprived of any authority in the premises, it being the admitted doctrine that the treaty and legislative powers are not concurrent, that the treaty power is necessarily limited by the powers granted to Congress, and that what is intrusted to one is withheld from the other. Nor can this alliance result in any good, I will not say to the *South*, but to the United States. It has already materially injured Cuba and Brazil, our only two slaveholding compeers, whose commerce and prosperity are even more valuable to the hireling than to the slave States.

In addition to all which, let me add, the British Government has violated the obvious intention and plain meaning of the treaty. Why, at the very time this Queen power of abolition was negotiating this alliance, alternately threatening and fawning at the Brazilian court, and weaving her treacherous coils at Madrid, remodelling her mixed commissions, and sweeping the infection of slavery even from Africa, she was deliberately maturing the scheme of a new system of African bondage in her own West India Islands! Who does not remember her futile efforts in 1842 to obtain "free African emigrants?" And who among us did not rejoice that she again became the victim of her own hypocrisy? Yet, even now, she hugs the phantom to her soul, and smiles complacently on the "Portuguese-African emigrants, who come to serve a voluntary apprenticeship of ten years." Boasting, the while, that she will yet keep slavery down by inaugurating her new system of bondage in the persons of transported Sepoys and the captured denizens of Canton. Delhi is to rival Wydah in the slave trade. Oude is to outstrip Dahomey; and, as the *Times* hath it, "the new hold we shall have on Asia will give facilities for doing what we wish."

England is bent on mischief, if unceasing hostility to African slavery in Brazil, Cuba and the South is mischievous. *And she never will suspend her efforts until they end in triumph or disaster.* The "green-eyed monster" is even souring the *entente cordiale*, and she looks askant at her imperial ally across the channel, because he has had the good sense at least to try and resuscitate his colonies with a little African labor, albeit, he honestly pays a price for it. Think and say what she may of LOUIS NAPOLEON'S *parvenue* "despotism," he is by far the shrewdest monarch in Europe. In spite of his *coup d'etat* he is entitled to the gratitude of France, not only for the care he takes of the empire and the colonies, but for his sensible and independent course in other respects.

But to return from a digression, and to cut my story short. If it is not our policy to form *political alliances* in general, England is the very last power on earth with which the South should think of forming one in particular. There is no affinity, no assimilation between our institutions or our modes or motives of action. Our aspirations are not congenial, and we never can be nearer in our sympathies. There can be no objection to *treaties of commerce* with her. She buys our cotton and pays for it in goods. She makes as much out of us as is reasonable in the way of trade. That should suffice. Men trade with each other without any love being lost between them; so may nations. Because we sell her our cotton it is no reason we should assist her in suppressing African slavery to make room for cooliyism.

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#### No. 15.

"There can be no doubt that slavery will once more gain the ascendant unless we carry out a plan of free labor. Our colonies in the West are the field for such a scheme, our empire in the East may furnish the laborers, and the new hold we shall have on Asia will give facilities for doing what we wish." *London Times.*

"As it is not among the merchants, the mechanics nor the landed proprietors that we find emigrant laborers here, so in Africa we do not seek among the free, who enjoy a certain degree of comfort and authority for laborers willing to expatriate themselves to work for wages under a foreign climate."—*Paris Constitutionnel.*

In concluding the subject of this treaty, fellow-Southerners, I must respectfully add my sincere regret that the negotiators have not recorded, in their correspondence, the exchange of views which must necessarily have passed between them before they incorporated the 8th, 9th, and 11th articles. The subject matter of these articles, as already shown, had been thoroughly investigated by both governments twenty years before. And with regard to the mere form of negotiation, it may be said to have been renewed in 1812, just where it was suspended by Mr. CLAY's note already cited.

LORD ASHBURTON reached Washington on the 4th April, 1842, and it is to be presumed the matter of the slave trade was discussed at an early day thereafter, for we find Mr. WEBSTER making written inquiries of Naval officers respecting it, before the close of the month. But there is some obscurity overshadowing the particulars in dispute. At one place Mr. WEBSTER says, (letter to Gen. Cass, Dec. 20th, 1842,) "The English minister no more *presented* this subject for negotiation than the government of the United States presented it. Nor can it be said that the United States *consented* to its introduction in any other sense than it may be said that the British minister consented to it." From this we

are to understand, that "this very delicate and important subject," as he terms it, was simultaneously opened by the two negotiators, or else that the stipulation was the result of propositions from one and counter-propositions from the other. It does not appear that any other interpretation is to be put upon this statement. But Mr. WEBSTER tells us in another letter to Gen. CASS, (November 14th, 1842,) that the treaty "complies with no demand, grants no application, conforms to no request," and "makes no concession to England whatever." That "England did not urge the United States to enter into this conventional arrangement. The United States yielded to no application from England. The proposition for abolishing the slave trade, *as it stands in the treaty*, was an *American* proposition; it *originated* with the Executive government of the United States, which cheerfully assumes all its responsibility. It stands upon it as its own mode of fulfilling its duties, and accomplishing its objects."

Now *is* there a contradiction in these two letters? How is it "that the United States consented" in no other sense than "the British minister consented" according to Mr. WEBSTER's recollection on the 20th December, while according to his recollection on the 14th November, the British minister made no "demand," "application," nor "request;" and the alliance was "an American proposition" upon which the "Executive government" stands "*as its own mode* of fulfilling its duties?" It is difficult to understand how any proposition can originate mutually with two parties, being also consented to by each in the same "sense," when it is positively declared by one of them to *originate* with *itself* and to be "its own mode of fulfilling its duties and accomplishing its objects."

But we have more light from the American negotiator in his letter to the President, (26th Feb., 1843,) in which he says, "that the engagement entered into by the parties to the treaty of Washington for suppressing the African slave trade was unconditionally proposed and agreed to." The alliance, then, being "an American proposition," was unconditionally "proposed" by Mr. WEBSTER, and, of course, unconditionally "agreed to" by Lord ASHBURTON with great alacrity. Now what was the necessity for this alliance? As Gen. CASS very truly observes to Mr. WEBSTER,—"Till then we had executed our own laws in our own way," but now we have "stipulated in a solemn treaty, that we will carry into effect our own laws." What a lofty engagement this! First make a law, and then "voluntarily" and "unconditionally" bind ourselves to a foreign power to execute it. Thus placing our municipal laws beyond the reach of Congress. Suppose the act of 1807 and all subsequent to it were repealed, would that abrogate the treaties of Ghent and Washington? If it would not, then we would have a treaty and a law in conflict. And which would be paramount in this case? If it would, then Congress can, by a simple repeal of a few of its acts abrogate a treaty. Truly, for the government of a great empire like this, "its own mode of fulfilling its duties and accomplishing its objects" is wondrous



clever, and when it is remembered that cruisers had been sent to Africa ever since the invention of the latter-day pirates it seems unprecedentedly so.

Now, from what has been quoted from Messrs. MONROE and PINCKNEY, it is undeniable that the project of entering into treaty stipulations on the subject was from the very first a scheme of the British government. And is it not equally unquestionable that from the time our government was once fairly committed, by the stipulations of 1806 and 1814, the great object of that government has been to extort from this a concession, however qualified, of the right to search American vessels? And whether or not Mr. WEBSTER proposed the alliance of 1842, it is plain that it resulted from the negotiations of previous occasions. What had the British government ever asked for, down to the arrival of Lord ASHBURTON, but our co-operation in persuading the other American governments to abandon the traffic; and our consent for her cruisers to search our vessels as the only practical means by which *her* navy could suppress it. There is no other request on the record. But upon what points do the 8th and 9th articles of the treaty rest? Why upon these and *these only*. Do they not then *treat upon propositions originally coming from the British government?* The ninth article explains itself, and as to the eighth, is it not, in spite of its being a dodge of the question of search, palpably and confessedly the result of—the expedient to which we were driven by—the previous propositions of that government? Look at the chain of events.

In 1806, Mr. MONROE and Mr. PINCKNEY are prevailed upon by the British ministry, without having instructions from home on the subject, to assent to the 24th article of the proposed treaty of amity, commerce and navigation. In 1814 a similar stipulation is appended to the treaty of Ghent. Our government thus, to satisfy the wishes of the British Cabinet, became committed, first, to a participation in a diplomatic combination against slavery in all those countries which then depended on the slave trade for a supply of labor, and, second, to the mistaken policy of treating at all with foreign nations on the subject. What follows? We have no sooner fallen into the snare, hardly as yet enlisted in the crusade, before there comes another proposition from London for its more effectual prosecution! Within four years after being trapped we are called upon to make good our professions by entrusting our commerce to the discretion of the British navy and subjecting our vessels to its search. And this, it is useless to deny, has been the constant object and ultimatum of British policy for forty years;—from the first suspected American craft ever searched, down to the seizure of the ‘Panchita’ and the ‘Thomas Watson,’ last year.

Again, in 1819, the Prince Regent is requested to renew the proposition. Impatient of the result, we are summoned anew in 1823 to accept the proposal or name a better project. The nonsensical idea of making the trade piracy under the law of nations was thrown out as the great panacea of modern philanthropy,

only to prove itself a harmless and neglected nostrum. A treaty was finally arranged, and, as we have seen, defeated on account of the two governments not agreeing as to the right of search.

But when the negotiation was terminated by Mr. CLAY's note, was not the issue narrowed down to the simple question of search? And when it was renewed in 1842 was any other element involved? Did either government doubt the sincerity of the other? Had they not for twenty years past kept a naval force on the African coast for the protection of commerce and the enforcement of the rights and obligations of their respective flags? And is any new duty imposed upon either government with respect to the enforcement of its laws? Why, then, in the absence of any *mistrust*, enter into new obligations? The answer in plain English is, *to produce an effect upon other governments*. To intimidate, embarrass and injure BRAZIL and CUBA! The genius of British policy may be supposed to have soliloquized thus:—"The United States have prohibited the slave trade and pronounced it piracy. They have also had the complaisance to engage with me in frowning it down throughout the world. That was well. Half of them being slave States, they have no disposition to see slavery abolished in Cuba and Brazil. But I, on the other hand, have a strong desire of that sort. They too, in going as far as they have, probably think they have done penance enough, and their blunted consciences are doubtless satisfied. But, I confess, they have not come up to my expectations. I have a desire to make further use of them before they become too powerful for me to manage. Without some sort of countenance from *them*, I shall have difficulty in Brazil and Cuba. It is true, I have cajoled the abolition party handsomely, and, for that matter, have set the States at loggerheads among themselves, and have taught the Cubans and Brazilians to mistrust if not despise them. But there is something still wanting. Ah! I have it:—They are in a dilemma! I must transfix them before they discover it and escape. They call their slavers *pirates*! Pirates they are forsooth! Well, am I not the Queen of Commerce? The sun never sets on my dominions. Why should these yankee pirates build up the sugar, tobacco, and coffee interests of Cuba and Brazil while *my* Empire can supply those articles? This is an outrage upon my well-known sentiments of 'humanity and justice' which cries aloud for redress. Their meddlesome and graceless minister at Paris (Gen. CASS) has knocked my nice quintuple treaty into a cocked hat. But the dilemma:—Since their traders are pirates, they cannot demur if I capture them, and if I should happen to search a vessel engaged in lawful commerce a little damages will settle it, all *that* can be amicably arranged. And if they will not consent to my chasing the pirates, I will resolutely insist upon *their* doing it. And to make the issue, I shall at once order my 'Bloodhounds' and 'Sapphos,' my 'Styxes' and my 'Buzzards,' to proceed with their searches, and shall await the result with a perfect assurance of success. If they will not acknowledge the right of search, they shall at least *avoid* it, which is after all only a negative way

of acknowledging that there is at least some force in my claim. Nobody ever dodges at nothing! If I can make them *dodge* now, I shall not be long in finding means to *hit* them. So then it shall be." And what was the result?

The long silence which followed the suspension of negotiations was broken by the British government putting in practice the claim to search our vessels which we had so often denied. British officers very naturally regarded pirates as outlaws without home or country, and very humanely searched for them where they were most likely to be found; viz: in American vessels. Our government took a different view of the matter. These latter-day pirates seem to be a sort of private property of the United States. We set up to enjoy a monopoly of them. They are pirates strictly in an *American* sense. And why not? The Pickwickians viewed certain matters in a "Pickwickian sense!" They were only a club. We are a great and harmonious nation of republics. Let us then insist upon it that our slaves are all plunder, we are all pirates, and that every United States Marshal ought to be provided, at the public cost, with a sufficiency of hemp to hang us all by the necks—but, *only in a "Pickwickian sense."*

But to conclude:—Has not England got by this treaty all she wants, except the mere form of an acknowledgment of her right to search? She would even *prefer* our paying for a force of 80 guns to paying it herself. She has the substance of her wishes! Why only the other day the term of service for which some of our sailors had shipped in the African squadron being about to expire, they were ordered home, and *immediately* the British minister wants to know *why there is not the stipulated force on the coast*. The "Executive government," as Mr. WEBSTER calls it, having its memory thus jogged by its august ally for not prosecuting "its own mode of fulfilling its duties," of course made the proper explanations and assurances. Now, viewing the whole affair from first to last, is it not a *farce*? One, too, for which we, *we of the South*, pay dearly?

The several acts prohibiting the slave trade are municipal laws, which cannot require a political alliance with a foreign power for their execution. Our government professes to be "*fully able to enforce its own laws without the aid of British cruisers*," and yet we find in the treaty of Washington the most solemn obligations "*to enforce the law*." Now the treaty power has nothing to do with enforcing the laws of Congress. Great Britain nor no other Power on earth is to take part in executing them. If, then, *these* laws require "a provision introduced into a treaty to enforce them," they cannot be among those which our government is "fully able to enforce," and being consequently inefficient, should be repealed. Or if, on the other hand, they *do not* require "a provision introduced into a treaty to enforce them," then should that provision be abrogated. With you, intelligent reader, I leave the choice.



## No. 16.

## CONCLUSION.

Having now, my countrymen, endeavored to present some of the points involved in the great, and as yet unsolved problem of African slavery, I will add, in conclusion, a few remarks which should have been included in the foregoing letters.

The policy of not discussing the point, whether a further importation of slaves from Africa would be beneficial to the South, because it is supposed that, however beneficial it might be, it is not practicable in the Union, and because it is further supposed that such discussion will divide the South, rests by no means upon unquestionable grounds. Should nothing be discussed which is supposed to be impracticable at the time? Can anything be discussed, let it be either practicable or impracticable, which will not divide the south? Was the South ever as united as could have been desired? Will she ever be? These are questions worthy of at least a passing notice.

Discussion is the great prerogative of a free people, and can be dreaded by despots only. It is the sole though rugged road to truth. And when it is closed to the people, no surer evidence can be wanted either of a weak cause or a strong tyranny. An effort to prevent discussion is one of the worst omens of a declining people; for it is the certain consequence of invaded or abandoned rights, of irresistible oppression or gross imbecility. Nothing can be said to be proved or established until it is questioned. The rightfulness and justice, the humanity and morality, the economy and profitableness of slavery itself was never satisfactorily established in the Southern mind until they were questioned and *discussed*. It is so also with the *adjuncts* of slavery. If the South will not discuss them, for fear of displeasing a few Northern politicians, or of dissolving a union with abolitionists, or of displeasing individuals at home who can find no other measure for the strength of her institutions than the price of her slaves; then is there cause to apprehend that there is a weakness pertaining to slavery which the South is afraid to have exposed. Secrecy is the aim of the wrong doer, and a discussion of his ways is formidable only to him. There are some also who will or can "neither be persuaded by argument, nor instructed by experience;" to them of course discussion is useless. But the mass of mankind, particularly those living under a free government, esteem discussion to be not only a right, but a duty, which becomes the more inestimable and binding the more it is denounced. All great principles need frequent discussion, as well that they might receive new vitality as that they may be imbibed by succeeding generations. Had LUTHER and MELANCTHON not discussed the principles of Christianity, the Pope of Rome might still have been the ruler of the civilized world; and had HAMPDEN, through fear

of discussion, acted as the so called "moderate men" of his day, "instead of hazarding his whole fortune in a law suit with the crown, he would have quietly paid the twenty shillings demanded of him—the STUART family would probably have continued upon the throne, and, at this moment, the imposition of ship money would have been an acknowledged prerogative of the British crown."

But it is not the mere discussion or "agitation" of this question that seems objectionable to some; it is its discussion *while in the Union!* and the ground of objection is, that the importation of slaves is impracticable while the Union lasts. There are many who do not concur either in these premises or this conclusion. Some do not think the importation so impracticable as others suppose; conceding, though, that it is impracticable, the question occurs, what Southern measure *is* practicable in the Union? If the South must wait for the union to be dissolved before she discusses any measure which the North will not probably accede to, the question naturally occurs, when and how is the Union to be dissolved? A dissolution of the Union is about as impracticable a measure, while in the Union, as the importation of slaves, and probably much more so. The same rule then which holds in one case ought to hold in the other. And the dissolution of the Union ought no more to be discussed than the importation of slaves. But if the dissolution of the Union is never discussed, it is safe to say it will never be accomplished. And if it is never accomplished, then no other measure, which, according to this rule, should not be discussed previous to dissolution ever will be except through the sufferance of the North. If, therefore, it be sound philosophy to discuss nothing which is not unquestionably practicable in the Union, it is certain that the proposition not to discuss the policy of importing slaves until the Union is dissolved, means never to discuss or accomplish either.

But suppose the principle applies in one case and not in the other: that while the slave trade is a sealed subject, the dissolution of the Union is a legitimate one of discussion, and will soon be accomplished—is it any more defensible? If the Union is to be dissolved, is the South to rush blindfold into the experiment without discussing and understanding what is to be her policy after the Rubicon is passed? Is it possible that enlightened statesmen would sunder the ties which bind them with another people without first discussing the policy they are to pursue? If the Union is in danger of dissolution, does not that fact alone admonish you to discuss and understand the policy you are to pursue, to compare your interests, to lay down your conditions, to discover your friends and prepare for your enemies? We are discussing the policy of direct trade with Europe from Southern ports, of direct taxation and free trade, the repeal of the navigation laws, and other great measures which are scarcely more practical in the Union than the slave trade, and the chief benefit to be

derived from such discussion is the preparation of the Southern people for their adoption when, *if ever*, the Union is dissolved, for to all appearances, we are a subjugated people, conquered by our own allies. And for the same reason the discussion of the policy of re-opening the slave trade is proper and beneficial. Congress and the people have been discussing the admission of a slave State, an event which all know *never will again occur while the Union lasts*. It seems at least evident that if nothing is to be discussed which the hireling States will not probably accede to, the days of Southern independence are numbered. This discussion aims at the repeal of certain acts of Congress just as others do, and is equally legitimate.

But, it is said, it will divide the South. This, in no case, can hold as a good reason. The South always is and will be divided, as all other free people are, upon great questions of interest and policy. In the days of the revolution the South was terribly divided between whigs and tories, and her division was recorded in fraternal blood! Every great question since then has divided her and will divide her as long as freedom of speech and of the press is enjoyed. The proposition is to restore to the South a **FREE TRADE IN LABOR**—an advantage which all other people in the world enjoy saving only the slaveholding countries in America. It is to give to the people of each of the Southern States at their own discretion power to obtain, as the people of the hireling States do, labor from whence they may. And if this reasonable and just proposal is to cause a serious rupture among those States, it is of the first importance that the people should know it *before the Union is dissolved*, that they might act understandingly and in the full knowledge of the consequences of such dissolution. If, for example, Virginia is willing to dissolve the Union only upon condition that she may have a monopoly of the business of supplying Texas with slaves, it is but just that Texas should know it before she takes the unalterable step and subjects herself anew to the monopoly. And if Texas is willing to dissolve the Union only because she wants a competition between Virginia and Africa, it is but just that Virginia should know it before she goes out of the Union. So far from these divisions being deprecated they are desirable, for it is hardly to be questioned that it is of the highest importance to the South to know the discordant elements at work within before she assumes the responsibilities and dangers of a separate republic, rather than wait to discover them when the difficulties attending the establishment of a new government may occasion jealousies and embarrassments of vital import and disastrous in their consequences. Homogeneity of sentiment and interest in a confederacy of States is far more essential than greatness of numbers if it be accompanied with rivalry and mistrust. It is better, therefore, if the discussion of this question is in truth to cause such deep divisions at the South as seem to be apprehended, that it be proceeded with *before* the Union is dis-



solved, which in the humble opinion of your correspondent, is an event which may possibly be further off than the importation of Africans.

Two leading objections to the importation seem to be, first, that it will reduce the price of slaves, and thereby destroy a large proportion of the capital now invested in slaves; and, second, that it will occasion an over production of cotton, and thereby reduce its price and injure the planting interest of the country. The latter has already been briefly discussed. In view of the former, the proposition has even been called "*agrarian*." But it has already been shown that the price of slaves, or of their produce, is not a sure criterion of their permanent value, still less can it be of the strength and stability of the institution. Slaves sold, during the past winter, at a lower price in South Carolina than in any other Southern State, but the institution is certainly as strong there as in Kentucky, where they sold highest, and the slave is equally valuable as a producing agent in the two States. In one, the proportion of buyers to sellers happened to be less than in the other, and hence the difference in price. South Carolina and Kentucky are perhaps equally wealthy in proportion to population, and the price of slaves, within their respective limits, is no evidence of their respective wealth and prosperity. The true wealth of a State consists in its capacity to produce, and not in the *cost* of its productive labor. The man who owns one thousand acres and fifty slaves, and exports one hundred bales of cotton, is certainly doing a better business than his neighbor who owns the same amount, but exports only fifty bales; it matters not what the land and negroes *cost*. Supposing the cost the same in the two cases, the one makes twice the profits of the other, and is by just so much the richer of the two. Or if the difference of cost is proportionate with the difference of exports, the profits would be equal, but still the former would have double the income of the latter, and be by just so much the richer of the two. But here the parallel, between the individual and the State, ends, because if the individual sells his estate, there is likely to be a sufficient number of purchasers in the market to give it, through their competition, a value in keeping with the income it yields; whereas the State can never be sold in the sense of the estate, for among other reasons, it would find no purchaser, or, if it did, there would be no competition, and the *price* being fixed upon at the dictation of the buyer, cannot be expected to bear the same proportion to the exports of the State, as that of the estate to its exports in the case of competition. So that the wealth of a State, consisting, as it assuredly does, in its capacity to produce, can be *measured* only by its produce *exported*, and not by the first cost of its vested interests, nor the quoted price of any of them. This is eminently the case with the great land and slave interest at the South. The *price* of our slaves concerns nobody outside of the Southern States, but the price of their *produce* concerns the whole commercial world. And the reason is, that the market value of the

one is only nominal, but of the other is real. Slaves are not quotable in the current prices of the day, because they are not in the market, a few only being occasionally sold to meet liabilities. A plantation or farm is not a shop nor a vendue table. The slaves thereon are no more in the market than the looms and spindles of a factory. They are wanted for *use* and not for exchange. The manufacturer likes to buy his machinery and his labor at a low price, and so does the planter or the farmer, if he knows his own interest. It seems, then, not to be a truth, that a reduction in the price of slaves, resulting from an importation of Africans, would occasion a loss to the interest vested in slaves, the price being nominal, and slaves not being stock in trade bought to be sold. Such a reduction in fact must always be a consequence as well as a cause; it must result from the price of produce and from the proportion of sellers to buyers. The price of slaves has certainly risen of late years; is the institution any stronger? But a word as to the idea that the importation of slaves is an agrarian measure.

It is contrary to the whole course and tenor of these letters, fellow-countrymen, to advert particularly to cotemporaries, either in argument or for illustration, but, on this point, I am induced briefly to depart from the rule. Agrarianism and abolitionism are terms which Southern men have a dislike to, and when used in connection with Southern measures, must indicate at least warm opposition. In a speech recently made at the Southern Convention, a gentleman from Virginia is represented as saying—

“And for what purpose is this incalculable destruction of value and property recommended? To enlarge the basis of slavery; in other words to propitiate the non-slaveholding class by giving them an interest in the institution. And what is that but agrarianism in the worst and most offensive form? The proposition is, that the planter shall consent to a reduction of twenty, thirty, fifty, or seventy-five per cent. from the value of his property and the yield of his capital, in order that the poorer classes in the community may obtain an interest in slavery. *Why not leave slave property and slave production at their present figure, and exact from the slave-owner a bonus of so much for the benefit of the non-slaveholder? Why not effect the robbery in kind, and by the simple operation of force, transfer a negro from the rich man's plantation to the poor man's hovel? The propositions are identical in principle and substance, and the difference between them is a difference in candor and directness.* Worse still, the policy of the gentleman is practical abolitionism; for, if you may destroy the half or the fourth of the value of negro property in the interest of the community, you may destroy his entire value upon the same decent pretext.”

There is more in this paragraph to be regretted than the absence of logic: it evinces a warmth which it is to be hoped will pass away. If the importation of slaves is agrarianism, robbery and abolitionism *now*, it probably will not be denied that it was such when it existed in former years, and if this be so it follows that agrarianism, robbery and abolitionism are the foundation of slavery, for, without the importation of slaves, nothing can be plainer than that slavery would never have been introduced into this country. The terms are harsh, to say the least of them, and much to be regretted, particularly as coming from Virginia, which is said to be the slave-breeder for the South. I shall endeavor to

illustrate the mistake by applying the argument to Virginia instead of Africa, not with a view to retort; far be it from your correspondent, but to put it to the test of experience. If it be true that the importation of slaves from Africa into Texas amounts to extracting from the Texas slave-owner a *bonus* for the benefit of the Texas non-slaveholder, or to forcing "a negro from the rich man's plantation to the poor man's hovel," it must be true of such importation from any other country, and if it be true of any other country it must be true of Virginia. But if it be true in the case of Virginia and Texas, it must be true with respect to any two other States, and with respect to *all* the States. And, if this be so, the inter-State slave trade is upon the same footing with the African, except that under the existing monopoly the *bonus* in one case is given by the poor man to the Virginia trader, and in the other, as is contended, by the rich man to the poor man. If there is any choice, the latter is certainly preferable, for the rich man is better prepared to give the bonus than the poor man, albeit his goes to Virginia. But there is no bonus in the affair, nor agrarianism nor abolitionism. The question viewed from this point is neither more nor less than one of **FREE TRADE!**

The agrarian laws of Rome, from which the modern exaggerated idea of agrarianism is derived, can find no possible parallel in the repeal of the anti-slave trade laws of this country. CICERO describes them as driving people from their possessions, as taking money from one man to give to another, and as not suffering every man to retain his own. They applied to the *granting* of lands, and not to their *price*, nor to the buying and selling of them. Now suppose the slave trade re-opened, will a single citizen of the United States have a slave or a dollar taken from him? It is said that the planter will experience a reduction in "the value of his property and the yield of his capital." This is conjecture sufficiently extravagant, and I believe wholly erroneous, but, for the sake of argument, it may be admitted. The postulate then is, that to import slaves will reduce the value of those already in the country, and the yield of capital vested in them, and hence is agrarianism! If this is true of slaves, there is no reason why it should not be true of other property; for, it must be observed, this assumption rests only upon the consideration that slaves are property. If, then, it be true, that to repeal one law which affects the price of one sort of property, is agrarianism, it must be true with respect to any other law which affects the price of some other description of property. And if the repeal of a protective or prohibitory law affecting one description of property will reduce its value and its yield, and thereby injure the interests vested in and dependent upon such property, the repeal of another law affecting similarly some other sort of property, must be equally injurious to interests vested therein. Now there are many laws which protect vested interests in the United States which the South is eager to repeal. But according to the doctrine of this postulate, it would be "agrarianism in the worst and most offens-



ive form," to repeal the tax on imports and resort to direct taxation, or to repeal our navigation laws, because the interest vested in manufactures, mining, and the coasting trade, would experience a reduction in value and yield.

It is truly observed in the excellent report recently submitted to the House of Representatives, on the subject of FREE TRADE, (report of Mr. BOYCE, of So. Ca.,) that, "*the logical consequence of protection is prohibition*. If it is unwise to buy from the foreigner because his product is only 20 per cent. cheaper than the home product, then it is unwise to buy from him though it were 1000 per cent. cheaper." Protection and prohibition differ only in degree, not in essence or principle, so far as they affect the price, or value or yield of any sort of property, slaves not excepted. Any argument which applies to free trade in cotton fabrics, iron ware, or any property of foreign manufacture or growth, applies to free trade in slaves of foreign growth. I will cite, therefore, some of the undeniable propositions of this report as true respecting the importation of slaves as of any other property.

"Every American citizen ought to have the privilege to buy ships (slaves) wherever he can buy them to the best advantage. To compel him to buy from American ship-builders (American slave breeders or traders) at an enhanced price is, to the extent of that enhanced price, to confiscate his property, and transfer it to another. Such a monopoly is utterly inconsistent with the spirit of our institutions. Our ship-builders (slave-traders) have a right to equality; they have no right to exclusive privileges. As a question of expediency, it seems equally indefensible. Either American built ships (American born slaves) are cheaper or dearer than foreign built (born.) If they are cheaper, they do not need this prohibition of foreign purchase. If they are dearer, they do not deserve it. It is the interest of the great mass of the people of the United States, both producers and consumers, to have ships (slaves) cheap, for the price of ships (slaves) enters as an element in the cost of transportation (production.) This monopoly either makes ships (slaves) dearer, and enhances the cost of transportation (production,) or it is useless. If it makes ships (slaves) dearer, and enhances the cost of transportation (production,) it should be abolished. If it accomplishes nothing, it is useless, and should not encumber the statute books."

"The doctrine of free trade, or, as it may more comprehensively be called, free exchanges, rests upon the great principle of justice. Every individual has a right to use his labor (or capital) in the manner most to his own advantage, provided he violates the right of no other person. Individuals cannot enjoy this right effectually, unless they are permitted to exchange the fruits of their labor to the best advantage. Government, therefore, has no right to interfere by *protective or prohibitory duties*, (or laws) and compel one portion of the community to exchange the fruits of their industry, their products, with another class of the community on less advantageous terms than they could exchange them with foreigners. For instance: Government cannot rightfully, by protective duties, (or laws) compel the wheat growers of Ohio, (cotton growers of Alabama) to exchange their wheat (or money) for a less value of goods manufactured in New England, (a less number of slaves raised in Virginia) than they could obtain by exchange with English manufactures, (importing from Africa.) To do so, is to commit a spoliation on the wheat growers of Ohio, (cotton growers of Alabama) for the benefit of the New England manufacturers, (Virginia slave sellers.) To the degree that these wheat growers, (cotton growers) are compelled by such protective duties (or prohibitory laws) to exchange their products for a less value, (less number of slaves) to that extent a *spoliation is committed upon them*."

"The practical working of the protective policy (or prohibitory laws) is this: imposition of high duties on those foreign products (preventing the importation of foreign slaves) which come in competition with home products, (home slaves) so as to compel the consumers, (buyers) to purchase the home products (slaves)

at enhanced prices. The first fact which arrests our attention from this statement is, that the foreign products (slaves) are furnished cheaper than the rival home products, (slaves) as otherwise there would be no use for the high duties, (or prohibitory laws.) The practical effect of this, then, is, that the consumers, (buyers) are prevented, by governmental interference, from *buying cheap*. This seems to be a very singular effect for government to aim at, because *individual wisdom always suggests the idea of buying cheap*. All men of ordinary sagacity, in the management of their private affairs, *invariably endeavor to buy cheap*. Individuals who would act upon a different principle would be considered fit subjects for a *comission de lunatices inquirendo*. Now, it is very strange that laws should be made by government to prevent men buying cheap. *If it be wise for individuals to buy cheap, why is it not wise for the whole nation to buy cheap?*"

It may be said that these and similar arguments apply to foreign manufactures, but not to foreign slaves, because manufactures are consumed by everybody, but slaves are purchased only by some. This objection, however, is evidently without force. No one description of manufactures is consumed by everybody. No one description of property is bought by everybody, and the same principle which demands free trade in one, demands it in all. Viewing the question, then, from this point, it is hardly correct to say that to import slaves is agrarianism. It should always be remembered that the slave trade was abolished *not for the sake of keeping up the price of slaves*, but because it was thought to be in violation of "the principles of humanity and justice," that its suppression would promote the abolition of slavery. The effect of the prohibition, it is true, has been to enhance the price of slaves, but if free trade in slaves is agrarianism because it will reduce this enhanced price to that resulting from a natural competition, then is free trade in cotton and woolen manufactures agrarianism, because it will reduce their price to the level of a fair competition. To seek competition, to repeal protective or prohibitory laws, to establish free trade, takes nothing from one man to give to another, and is not agrarianism.

Nor is it "abolitionism." To increase is not to abolish. If the slave trade is abolitionism, what a singular and general oversight abolitionists of every grade have been guilty of in opposing it! To cheapen the price of property is generally to increase the number of property owners and the quantity of property. This is true of slaves, and to increase the number of slaves and of slaveholders in the country can hardly be to abolish slavery.

And now, my countrymen, I bid you adieu. As many of you as have been patient enough to follow me in these crude suggestions will do well to ponder them seriously. If anything I have written is fallacious, disprove and reject it; but *what is true*, I conjure you to receive and acknowledge freely and fearlessly. Though unknown to you, I am identified in all respects with you. My children and your children have the same interests, the same destiny; they will have the same heritage, the same enemies, the same friends. Let them not be reared up under the delusive sentiments and false philanthropy which have so long overshadowed us. To remove a prejudice is difficult at best, but to avert the consequences of an actual mania, which has raged on both sides

of the Atlantic for nearly a century, is formidable indeed. Yet, I have hopes, almost a conviction, that the singular fanaticism which has so effectually disturbed our tranquility, and not only threatened but impaired our prosperity, has lived its appointed time, and must soon succumb to reason and truth. We, of the South, are only awakening to a full sense of our duty, and a clear perception of our position. The progress of opinion in the last ten years has done much to redeem us from a fictitious degradation, which our own supineness has strangely tolerated; who can tell what the next ten will accomplish? But what are ten years in the career of a great people? A *lifetime* is not vainly spent if it removes a prejudice, or corrects an error, which is hurtful to our country or entails dishonor upon our posterity. I, for one, shall devote my brief span to the righteous cause of country and of truth, regardless of present opposition, whatever be its form, for, looking steadily beyond, I see the bright sun of victory rising to irradiate and enliven a regenerate and disenthralled South.

EDWARD B. BRYAN.



## LETTER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE.\*

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*To the Hon. LEWIS CASS, Secretary of State :*

Sir : Ministers of State are more frequently the injured subjects of obloquy than the meritorious recipients of laudation, so prone is the press to fault-finding and so perverse are the times. This must enhance the meed of praise, of itself never unwelcome, however humble its source ; and perhaps your observation has assured you that obscurity is not always an evidence of want of sincerity or discernment. It shall, therefore, be my pleasing task to point out one of your recent measures as a crowning chaplet to a long career of useful consistency and lofty purpose. My zeal shall be curbed by reflection, and my appreciation of measures shall not merge into the flattery of men.

It was the remark of a distinguished writer of the last century that "a generous nation is grateful even for the preservation of its rights, and willingly extends the respect due to the office of a good prince into an affection for his person." A free people are ever awake to the encroachments of a foreign power, and sternly rebuke the counsels which timidly permit them, but they too frequently overlook the wise precautions which prevent them. The conquering general is publicly honored for performing no more than his duty in the field, while the minister is often forgotten, though a like performance of duty in the cabinet may have caused an enemy to succumb, and saved his country from war. The field and the cabinet each afford opportunities for evincing the highest order of genius, but in such cases it will generally be found that the aim is aggressive—the object is something more than "the preservation of rights ;" it is rather to trench upon the rights of others. WASHINGTON displayed not half the military genius in defending America that BONAPARTE did in conquering Europe ; but the one, by merely defending the rights of his country, made success sure and permanent, while the other, by invading the rights of others, staked those of his own country on the issue of battle.

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\*This letter, originally published in the Richmond South, is appended to the foregoing (with a few notes and additions) as a further exposition of the subject treated in some of them.

Now, sir, I ascribe to you no more than a faithful performance of duty, in a manner dictated by long experience and enlightened judgment. You have done no more (if as much) than vindicate the inviolability of your country's flag upon the high seas. And though this is only, as yet, upon paper, it is very much more than some of your predecessors could ever bring themselves to attempt. *Their* timidity imparts to you the aspect of a boldness which, your candor will admit, is only the result of contrast. Nevertheless, the errors of the past are incentives to a better policy for the future, and the country now looks to you, in an especial manner, for that triumphant vindication of its flag which has been so long needed. The American people read in your antecedents the gratification of their wishes in this particular.

Your own convictions cannot fail to admonish you that the time is now come when the British claim of the right to search, and the trumpery of "visitation," should be definitely settled. Events have transpired within a few years, abuses have been perpetrated and offenses committed, which cannot honorably be submitted to, and which, if persisted in, must result in worse consequences than may be anticipated, and certainly worse than can be desired. If, then, your efforts avert these consequences, by forever putting at rest this daring system of outrage, your name will descend to posterity, embalmed in the praises of your countrymen and honored by every student of your country's history.

When neither shame nor fear restrains the headlong policy of an arrogant government, the injured parties might well despair, were it not for the ultimate certainty of its bringing defeat upon itself. Nature has generously provided a concomitant retribution for every great national wrong. What, then, may not be in store for the British Empire?

It is doubtless your own opinion, as it is certainly that of many other distinguished American statesmen, that the British government is not only the most aggrandizing and aggressive in the world, but is deservedly the most destitute of the sympathy of other nations. England's immense commerce may preserve peace to her in many cases where war would be justifiable, but it only fills the void occasioned by the absence of all political affinity. Her boasted ally across the channel, in spite of his frequent visits, is not enamored of the soil which feeds his assassins, nor of the people who contrived the charnel-house of his uncle. The secret feelings of France will find utterance only when the debt of Waterloo is cancelled. Austria, you know, could not be induced to sit down before Sebastopol, and Russia will not soon forget the alliance. Turkey declines surrendering Perim, and even Spain has refused to destroy the industry of Cuba. As to her "cousins across the sea,"—as the people of this Republic are so complaisantly styled,—you are aware that your predecessor was put to the necessity of informing a British Minister and two of his Consuls that their departure from the country would be a public gratification; their want of good manners, fair dealing, and even

ordinary respect for our laws, having ceased to be tolerable. It is true, British philanthropy finds imitative partisans in America; but where is it that the DEVIL is without imps? While, indeed, Americans cannot but emulate the skill, energy and greatness of England in the arts of peace, they heartily condemn her hypocrisy and see nothing in her audacity either to fear or admire. Having twice crossed weapons with her, we know the temper of her steel even better than the duplicity of her schemes, and have fewer apprehensions of the one than the other. Her faith is the sport of pretext. But, sir, to my subject.

It is the hope of your countrymen that whatever internal difficulties and embarrassments may impair the harmony of the Union, the President and yourself, if not his entire Cabinet, intend to inaugurate a more mature and consistent foreign policy than has heretofore guided our diplomatic intercourse; and you are both reputed to be not altogether blinded by the glare of British pretensions. With regard, then, to the question of "the right of search" or "visitation," growing purely out of our stupid and impolitic efforts to suppress the slave trade not only in the United States, but throughout the world, allow me to call attention to some of the points involved, not with the hope of presenting any views which you have not already scanned, but that the merits of the question may be recalled to the recollection of the people—a people, sir, not only free, but proud and sensitive. How dear to each of them is the honor of his country's flag! How despised the officer who would lower it in disgrace! How loved the man who bears it above reproach! More than all, how sacred the duty to punish its offenders!

"To permit a foreign officer to board the vessel of another power, to assume command in her, to call for and examine her papers, to pass judgment upon her character, to decide whether she is navigated according to law, and to send her in, at pleasure, for trial, cannot be submitted to by any independent nation without injury and dishonor. The United States deny the right of the cruisers of any power whatever, for any purpose whatever, to enter their vessels by force in time of peace." Such is the plain English addressed by you to the British minister in your recent correspondence, and, sir, it is the language of every American heart. *But let me remind you that the same thing has been said before*—with what effect you very well know. Better results are hoped for now. For more than forty years the British government has been either exercising or urging the concession of, at least a *limited* right of search, which our government has invariably refused to grant. The records of the State, Navy and other Departments, will afford you ample evidence of the manner in which our refusal has been respected. I will not fatigue you with instances; the more recent ones to which public attention has been directed are sufficient. But witness the defiant tone of a government whose pliancy to interest is only surpassed by its disregard of right and law.



After the repeated denials of the right to search, or even visit, recorded in messages and despatches from the American Executive and his Secretaries—in spite of Mr. PEEL's declaration in Parliament, when he was the first minister of the Crown, that "the right of search, with respect to American vessels, we entirely and utterly disclaim"—in the teeth of Lord ABERDEEN's repeated disavowals of any claim of right to "search American vessels in time of peace," and his assurance that "the British cruisers are not instructed to detain American vessels under any circumstances whatever"—it turns out that vessels bearing the American flag *are* required, by instructions to British cruisers, to be "*visited*" in cases of "*grave suspicion*" and "well founded doubt of the genuineness of the flag," the requisite amount of suspicion and doubt being *necessarily determined by the British officer in each case*. And after the treaty of Washington is ratified in the hope and upon the assurance that the question of search would be practically obviated, Mr. Fox, the British minister at Washington, is provided with a despatch designed to correct a statement in our President's message, and to inform our government, that Great Britain had not and would not recede "from the principle which she has constantly asserted;" that the British government "still maintained and would exercise, when necessary, *its own right* to ascertain the genuineness of any flag which a suspected vessel might bear," that if loss should be sustained, reparation would be afforded; "but that it should entertain, for a single instant, the notion of *abandoning the right itself*, would be quite impossible." As defined by Sir CHARLES WOOD in the House of Commons, (afterwards Chancellor of the Exchequer)—"the claim of this country is for the right of our cruisers to *ascertain* whether a merchant vessel is justly entitled to the protection of the flag which she may happen to have hoisted," and as Lord PALMERSTON adds, "*is navigated according to law*." Monstrous claim!

Now, sir, no one knows better than yourself how conclusively Mr. WEBSTER showed, in his despatch to Mr. EVERETT (March, 1843) *the means* by which alone this ascertainment can be effected. The *name* of search is changed for that of *visitation*. But how is the vessel to be visited? "Her right to the free use of the ocean is as perfect as that of any other ship." She is not "bound to lie by or wait the approach of any other ship." What but force, or the threat or fear of force, can stop her? Visitation then, if a *right*, is founded on force, and is as purely a belligerent right as search. Suppose the vessel refuses to stop on her voyage at the order of a British cruiser, as she clearly has a right to. Mr. WEBSTER asks, "is force to be used? and if used, may it be lawfully repelled?" What will be the nature of the offense? Which party will have committed offense? If it be said the cruiser mistook the American vessel for a piratical one, (and no other description of vessels can lawfully be stopped on the high seas in time of peace, except for some particular offense or under some particular treaty) the answer is plain—self-defense justifies the

repelling of force by force. It is a principle everywhere acknowledged and never to be questioned, that "the privilege of self-defense exists against an assailant who *mistakes* the object of his attack for another whom he had a right to assail." The right (so called) of visitation, then, is unfounded either in natural or international law. There can be no distinction between visitation and search in point of right and but little in point of fact, and the reason is plain. What is the object of visitation? Lord ABERDEEN says it is to ascertain the nationality of the vessel, the genuineness of the flag, and Lord PALMERSTON adds, to see if she is lawfully navigated. How are these points to be determined? The papers and log books must be demanded and perused, the crew must be mustered and inspected, and her cargo and equipment must be examined. If this is not SEARCH, will you have the goodness to interrogate Lord NAPIER on the subject? In thus addressing so distinguished an opponent of this system of British outrage as yourself, my only regret is that your letter to M. GUIZOT, French Secretary for Foreign Affairs, which frustrated the quintuple league, has been misplaced and is out of my reach. The minister, however, who so clearly revealed the truth to Europe sixteen years ago, cannot forget its importance to America now, and needs no reminding. No one, sir, has more consistently and faithfully combated this pretension of an insatiable power, nor could you desire a better opportunity to verify your faith by works. *Finis coronat opus.*

But, sir, leaving the naked question of visitation, let us view it as it is involved in the treaty of Washington. This ill-advised and unfortunate treaty, you remember, never received your approbation. I have not forgotten the satisfaction enjoyed when I first read your

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\*The London Post observes:—"The British government has lately changed its tactics by placing cruisers around the island of Cuba, to intercept homeward and outward bound slavers. Now it unfortunately happens that the men who engage in the slave-trade are not very scrupulous in the use of articles which they hope will screen their vessel from the examination of a foreign cruiser. A slaver, manned by the vilest scum that can be picked up in the Portuguese ports on the coast of Africa, will hoist, just as it suits its purpose, the English, French, or the American flag, and truth compels us to add, that vessels of this kind have been sometimes owned and commanded by United States citizens. How, then, can it be possible to ascertain the nationality of any vessel sailing to or from a suspected slave mart, except by the exercise of that right of visitation and search, which, in reality, is as necessary a measure of high maritime police as that rule of public law which declares that pirates may be seized and punished wheresoever found."

And says the London Telegraph:—"We cannot abandon the right of search in reference to America without abandoning it as regards the rest of the world; we cannot recall our Gulf cruisers without establishing an African squadron; we cannot suppress our ocean police without again licensing, practically, if not avowedly, that slave traffic which has been the curse of one mighty continent and the reproach of another. But, at the same time, if it be really essential in order to maintain this principle, that American ships should be treated as we are led to believe by the reports in the transatlantic journals, we may be assured that we must give way or fight for our prerogative. \* \* \* America has entered into treaties with Great Britain for the suppression of this infamous barter, so far as the sea is concerned. We have a right, then, to capture and confiscate every slaver, and even to punish the captains and crews."

objections many years ago; it would have grown into admiration upon the perusal of your recent correspondence, were it not for a slight inconsistency to which I will presently call your attention. Judging then from the high and impregnable ground you took in your letter to M. GUZOT, and remembering the general approval it received in this country, as well of the people as the administration, I do not suppose your opinions can have materially changed since the close of your official residence at Paris. Allow me to mention a few.

In your despatch to Mr. WEBSTER of the 3d October, 1842, after informing him of your having conveyed to the French Government an official announcement of the ratification of the treaty of Washington, you observe: "In executing this duty, I felt too well what was due to my Government and country to intimate my regret to a foreign Power that *some declaration had not preceded the treaty, or some stipulation accompanied it, by which the extraordinary pretension of Great Britain to search our ships at all times and in all places would have been abrogated as equally incompatible with the law of nations and with the independence of the United States.*" The effect of the treaty, you add, was "to render it obligatory upon us, by a convention, to do what we have long done voluntarily, to place our municipal laws, in some measure, beyond the reach of Congress." In a subsequent despatch you write: "I never mentioned that our Government had conceded to that of England the right to search our ships. My difficulty is not that we have made a positive concession, but that *we have acted unadvisedly in not making the abandonment of this pretension a previous condition to any conventional arrangement upon the general subject.*" In the negotiation of a treaty, you justly remark, "topics are omitted or introduced at the discretion of the negotiators, and they are responsible, to use the language of an eminent and able Senator, 'for what it contains and what it omits.' *This treaty, in my opinion, omits a most important and necessary stipulation; and therefore, as it seems to me, its negotiation, in this particular, was unfortunate for the country.*"

It must be remembered that previous to the negotiation a correspondence had for one or two years been kept up between the agents of the two Governments "respecting certain seizures and detentions of American vessels on the coast of Africa by armed British cruisers, and, generally, respecting the visitation and search of American vessels by such cruisers." The question was squarely and fairly before the parties to the treaty and should *then* have been *settled* rather than "*avoided.*" So well founded is your objection in this particular that Mr. WEBSTER confessed to you, "it may be true that the British pretension leads necessarily to consequences as broad and general as your statement." And you know he was apprehensive lest the publication of your opinions might afford sufficient authority for the British Government *hereafter* to "found new claims or set up new pretensions," not being able, as he urged, to foresee "how far England might



hereafter rely on your authority for your construction favorable to her own pretensions, and inconsistent with the interest and honor of the United States." This apprehension must have been groundless if your opinions were unfounded. Time has partly confirmed the apprehension, inasmuch as the British Government *has* put a construction upon the *avoidance* of the issue quite inconsistent with the honor of the United States, though by no means upon "*your authority*;" and thus your predictions are wholly verified. YOUR OBJECTION GOES TO THE HEART OF THE AFFAIR, AND, YOU WILL ADMIT, IS AS FORCIBLE NOW AS EVER. Under the circumstances the treaty "*was* unfortunate for the country." But the evil is not without remedy. Can you think of none?

Treaty obligations are too solemn and binding to be lightly set aside, and national faith should be as sacred as private honor. But when cause can be shown why such obligations should be cancelled, national honor, as well as interest, may sometimes require their prompt abrogation. The country is now anxious for the repeal of the CLAYTON-BULWER treaty, for the reason that it was not only a grave error in diplomacy, but has been wilfully and injuriously misconstrued by the British Government. A similar feeling exists in relation to certain stipulations in the treaty of Washington. Whether it can be shown that there has been any palpable breach of faith with regard to them, need not now be discussed. You have acknowledged their failure.\* A fact long and sufficiently known to the people of the United States who feel that there has been not only error at home but a disposition to bully their flag abroad. They now claim at the hands of their government, a redress of wrongs and a prevention of their recurrence. Sir, you may be assured they will be con-

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\* This failure has been acknowledged in Parliament for more than ten years, and is now undenied by the British people and press. The following extract from a leading London paper is a fair expression of the truth of the case:

"The truth is, that the forcible prevention of slave trading is practically a failure.

"The conduct of our government and our squadron has not been such as to conciliate agreement in the matter of our late demands. It would need a volume to detail all the ins and outs of our present crooked system of forcible prevention. Exeter Hall, and Exeter Hall statesmen, think only of the negro, and of the circumstances which immediately affect him, and while this is the case there is only the old, short-sighted philanthropy to be looked for in those directions.

"This philanthropy is weak to contend against the active influence of the corrupt vested interests which have grown up under anti-slavery. The commander of every preventive ship naturally hopes that every vessel he sights upon the coast of Africa may turn out to be a "*prize*;" the agent, consular or otherwise, desires to perpetuate the present system, which makes his place what it is, and the British merchant would rather wink at slaving, than have America compete in the "*legitimate*" palm trade. It would not be difficult to prove from facts how little able this philanthropy is to control the warlike and diplomatic machinery which acts in the name of Exeter Hall on the west coast of Africa, but so acts as to hinder the genuine trade, and absolutely to foster the slave trade. Two facts bearing upon these points are patent: first, *the excessive persecution of shipmasters engaged in legitimate traffic, whose vessels are detained under false charges of slave-dealing, or carried far out of their course for the purpose of submitting them to inquiry*; secondly, *the practice of our officers to wink at the early stages of the traffic, in order that the trading ships may start with slaves on board, such prizes being enhanced by the head-money given for every slave captured.*"

tent with no temporising policy nor undecisive measures. While reposing great confidence in your sagacity and firmness, "they have too much understanding and spirit to accept of an indirect satisfaction for a direct injury." This sentiment is now uppermost in the American heart: "*Injuries may be atoned for and forgiven, but insults admit of no compensation.*" It is the general hope that *you* at least will disdain the wavering hesitations which have too frequently disfigured the course of your predecessors, and which by failing either to satisfy the people, or to defend their flag, has only excited their disgust and forfeited their pity.

When the British Government determined to send Lord ASHBURTON to Washington to negotiate with Mr. WEBSTER for the settlement of all dispute between the two countries, the question of search was certainly in contemplation; and when the Senate ratified the treaty, it was with the understanding that American vessels were thereafter not to be visited or searched by British cruisers, and the eighth article was not expected to continue of force more than *five years*. A correspondence had been pending between Lord PALMERSTON and Mr. STEVENSON respecting the visitation, search, seizure and detention of our vessels. You also had entered a formal protest on behalf of your government, against the measures proposed in the quintuple treaty; and the President had said, in a message to Congress, that "However desirous the United States may be for the suppression of the slave trade, they cannot consent to interpolations into the maritime code, at the mere will and pleasure of other governments. We deny the right of any such interpolation to any one, or all the nations of the earth, without our consent. We claim to have a voice in all amendments of that code; and when we are given to understand, as in this instance, by a foreign government, that *its* treaties with other nations cannot be executed without the establishment and enforcement of new principles of maritime policy to be applied *without our consent*, we must employ a language neither of equivocal import, nor susceptible of misconstruction. \* \* \* \*"

Whether this government should now enter into treaties containing mutual stipulations upon the subject, is a question for its mature deliberation. Certain it is, that if the right to detain American ships on the high seas can be justified on the plea of a necessity arising out of the existence of treaties between *other* nations, the same plea may be extended and enlarged by the new stipulations of new treaties to which the United States may not be a party. This government will not cease to urge upon that of Great Britain full and ample remuneration for all losses, whether arising from detention or otherwise, to which American citizens have heretofore been or may hereafter be subjected, by the exercise of rights which this government cannot recognize as legitimate and proper."

Upon Mr. EVERETT's appointment to succeed Mr. STEVENSON, "instructions were in the course of preparation" for him, when it was announced that Lord ASHBURTON was to be sent to this

country. Of course the instructions were not forwarded, as the subject was to be discussed in Washington. In writing to you, Mr. WEBSTER says: "The whole subject is now before us here, or will be shortly, as Lord ASHBURTON arrived last evening." And you probably remember that when, on the 13th of June, 1842, the House of Representatives requested from the Executive a copy of the quintuple treaty, and of your remonstrance, and the correspondence between your government and yourself on the subject, the President declined communicating at that time the papers in his possession, on the ground that it would not be compatible with the public interest," negotiation then being in progress. Thus, sir, you perceive the British claim of the right to search our vessels was one of the "matters in difference" between the countries when the negotiation of the treaty of Washington was opened. How was it disposed of?

Lord ABERDEEN says: "The claim of a right of search was *not discussed*." Mr. WEBSTER says: "A mode was resorted to which might render unnecessary both the assertion and the denial of such claim," forgetting, apparently, that the claim had not only been repeatedly *asserted* but *put in force*. The object of the stipulations, he adds, was "to avoid such differences and disputes as had already arisen;" "to take away all pretense, whatever for interrupting lawful commerce by the visitation of American vessels." And the President, in his message submitting the treaty to the Senate, made a similar statement. Thus, sir, you see the question was *avoided*, and a temporizing policy was pursued, which not only left the whole matter in dispute just where it was before, but which *by seeking, through the force of stipulations for the more effectual suppression of the slave trade, which had been prohibited thirty-five years before, to obtain those immunities of our flag which were already ours by the highest right known to the laws of nature and of nations, was a negative admission that England has at least some ground for her claim.* A policy weak and questionable under any circumstances, but eminently so when pursued with a government which is dead to every obligation that may chance to impede its aggrandizement, and whose national faith is seldom pledged in candor, and never broken for a cause.

But how did Mr. WEBSTER "avoid" the grave and important issue? What was the mode he resorted to? Why, the very experiment of a joint blockade, which you so truly inform Lord NAPIER is a total failure. After consulting two Captains in the Navy with respect to the number, size and description of vessels necessary "to put an entire end to the traffic in slaves," and the number of years it would be requisite to maintain the force, he proposed the 8th, 9th and part of the 11th articles, and the British negotiator unconditionally accepted them. Sir, you are well aware that the proposition has been as one-sided in its effects as it was in its origin. It was foreign to the question at issue between the parties—much more foreign than the subject of "impressment," which Lord ASHBURTON declined discussing,



upon the ground that his "mission was mainly the settlement of *existing* subjects of difference." Can you call to mind a single point at issue properly pertaining to the suppression of the slave trade? Was there the slightest mistrust between the parties? Were not both Governments equally honest in the execution of their prohibitory laws? Did not each maintain a naval force on the African coast for the purpose? Had not each declared the slave trade piracy? Had they not each their official agents on the coast to receive and provide for re-captured slaves? Was there any difference between them in sentiment, motive or intention? Was the suppression of the traffic in fact an "existing subject of difference?" Why then negotiate about it? Wherefore Mr. WEBSTER's proposition? He candidly avows it was *to avoid the real "subject of difference,"* which was then, as *now*, the claim of the "right of visitation," and *not* the suppression of the traffic in slaves.

This disposition of the matter was of course highly acceptable to Lord ASHBURTON. No British minister could have the folly to refuse such an offer. The true issue was postponed, and the British government was thereby emboldened not only to continue its outrages on the distant coast of Africa, but to flaunt in licensed audacity before our doors and mock our flag on our own unguarded waters. So much for the treaty. A word, if you please, sir, as to its ratification.

That the treaty was ratified under the delusion that the avoidance of the issue would amount to a settlement of it, is well known. Mr. CALHOUN, who was no advocate of the stipulations in question, was yet willing to ratify them. He said in plain terms, that we had to choose between two objectionable alternatives, or incur the risk of war, for which he did not think the country prepared. With respect to the question of search, he said: "It is objected that the arrangement entered into is virtually an acknowledgment of the right of search. He did not so regard it. On the contrary, he considered it, under all the circumstances, as a *surrender of that claim*; a conclusion, which a review of the whole transaction, in his opinion, would justify. Lord PALMERSTON, in the first place, claimed the unqualified right of search, in which it was understood he was backed by the five great powers. Lord ABERDEEN, with more wisdom and moderation, explained it to mean the right of visitation simply; and finally, the negotiation is closed without reference to either." This idea was entertained by many other Senators who voted for the treaty, and hence the majority by which it was ratified. Mr. WEBSTER himself says, somewhere, in relation to the question of search as "avoided" in the treaty, that the *last word of negotiation had been uttered*. . And the Senate thought so when it ratified the treaty. But it was deceived, as it has been more than once, by British diplomacy. It is said of Mr. CLAYTON, that he once remarked, in relation to his famous treaty, "I had a delusive idea that England therein engaged to retire from her Central American

usurpations, and in that faith the Senate ratified it." If Mr. WEBSTER were alive, he might now, with equal truth, exclaim respecting his treaty, "I had a delusive idea that England therein abandoned her claim to the right of search;" and Mr. CALHOUN might add, "*in that faith the Senate ratified it.*"

After this imperfect recapitulation, let us view the issue in its present form. The case of the Panchita, which occurred a year ago, is familiar to all, and the termination of it was full of significance, and served to foreshadow the recent outrages which so justly merit the indignation of the country. Mr. DALLAS, in his despatch to you, of October 9th, 1857, announces the result as follows :

"The particular case would seem to be satisfactorily disposed of. Commander Moresby's conduct is disclaimed and censured; he is withdrawn from the station as unfit to be trusted there, and express orders are alleged to have been given by the Admiralty which must prevent the repetition of such acts.

"It is observable that the disavowal and condemnation of Commander Moresby's proceedings are with great reserve founded *exclusively upon the stipulations of the treaty of 1842. Except as inconsistent with the arrangements of that treaty, his insult to the national flag, his search and seizure upon mere suspicion, might have been unproved.* You will pardon me for suggesting, that while this pretension of a right to supervise and reform the commercial pursuits of other countries, by the means of visit and search, is thus covertly maintained against the frank remonstrance of the United States, *it may be doubted whether it be consistent with the national dignity to prolong the exceptionable compact under whose express terms alone an immunity is recognized!*"

But, sir, in less than one month afterwards the searching commenced in the West Indies. The brig Black Hawk, from Porto Rico for New York, was "visited," on the 2d of November, by an officer of the British gun-boat Jasper, and since then more than fifty cases have occurred: The British West India cruisers having precisely the same orders with respect to the suppression of the slave trade as the African cruisers have.

Some months ago, sir, Lord NAPIER made certain representations to you as to the inadequacy of our naval force on the coast of Africa, and called your attention to the fact, that the stipulated force of 80 guns was not there present. You replied that the term for which a portion of the men in the squadron had enlisted being about to expire, they were allowed to return home, but that another vessel was fitting out for that coast, and would soon sail. The British Government, not content with this, renewed correspondence on the subject, and so far as we are to judge by the action of her cruisers, gave further orders for the search of our vessels, not only on the coast of Africa, where such search is nothing new, but in the Gulf of Mexico and the adjacent waters. The correspondence recently submitted to Congress has been the result. And to this I make no apology for recalling your attention.

A leading feature in your note of the 10th April, is the acknowledgment of the failure of the joint African blockade. This you impress upon the British Minister with a sincerity calculated to inspire the hope that you are not averse to the termination of the impotent and costly farce. Sixteen years have elapsed since the curtain rose, at the conclusion of a palaver which had never seen

the light; but, if there is now to be a shifting of the scene, from Africa to Cuba, allow me, as an interested spectator, to call upon you, as chief manager of the stage, to drop the curtain upon *the farce*, of which the audience is tired, and come to the footlights to announce the advent of a *tragedy*! Imagine, for a moment, the loss at which the future historian would find himself in recording the event of a war between the two greatest maritime powers on earth, only because the planters of Cuba wish to buy a few negroes in Africa, to cultivate sugar and other produce, of which both powers are among the largest consumers! And conceive, if you can, the surprise of his readers when they learn that ten times the amount of money has been expended in vain efforts to blockade Africa, which would have supplied America with slaves and thereby naturally terminated the desire and necessity for importing them. Add to this the absurdity of the whole attempt to frustrate an evident design of the great Creator, and a picture presents itself to which the lapse of time will hardly furnish a parallel. Sir, it would be pity to neglect the opportunity, so fully do the sentiments of the Administration and the people accord on this point. From the President down to the meanest sailor before the mast, all regard the blockade an *unmitigated humbug*, a diplomatic experiment, which experience pronounces utterly inadequate, and altogether disproportionate "to the expenditure of life and treasure it has cost." *Since the treaty is a failure, what remains but to abrogate it?* There is something anomalous, to use no harsher term, in persisting in a scheme which is acknowledged to be a fruitless and hopeless failure, and this leads to the *inconsistency* to which I have said your attention would be called.

I respectfully submit that you have gone a little out of your way and have departed from your usual course in making uncalled for suggestions with respect to the importation of slaves into Cuba. You observe to Lord NAPIER:—"To shut the ports of Cuba to their *entrance* is to shut the ports of Africa to their *departure*." In this there is a fallacy as well as an indiscretion. You certainly cannot be unaware of the fact that both the French and British colonies import negroes. You also must know that the Cuban planters are able to outbid them in Africa. And if the ports of Cuba were closed, you must see that the French and British colonies would immediately fall heir to a monopoly of the negroes, and hence would put their own price upon them. The result of this would be to increase the French and British emigration traffic, and instead of shutting the ports of Africa to the departure of negroes, your project of closing the ports of Cuba would serve only to divert the importation of negroes from that island to the British and French colonies. That this would be a desirable consummation to England and France, you may doubt but cannot deny. Hence it is that I say your proposition is fallacious.

But it is also indiscreet; an indiscretion due probably to the existence of this unfortunate treaty, but not the less an indiscretion for that. You must know the Spanish character well



enough to be satisfied that Spanish sentiment is not to be moulded into any shape that Englishmen or Americans might desire, and that to shut the ports of Cuba against the importation of slaves, is to be accomplished in no other way than by blockading the island. Your suggestion, then, must either fall to the ground a lifeless thing, or else must point to a blockade. The blockade now exists. Whether at your suggestion or not, is immaterial. With what consistency then and reason can you complain of a vigorous search for slaves along the coast and in the harbors of Cuba? England has as much right to blockade Cuba as Africa, and you have as little right to complain of the one as the other. You were satisfied in the case of the Panchita, will you be in the others?

The London Times says:

*"The slave trade treaties, by creating a mixed relation between war and peace, have introduced an unexpected difficulty into maritime law. Belligerent ships of war are undoubtedly entitled to visit neutral merchant vessels for the purpose of verifying their right of exemption from capture; and, as a right of seizure has been specially conceded by Spain and by some other Powers in the case of slavers, it follows that vessels of those countries are also liable to visitation. It is agreed on all hands that no such liability exists on the part of the United States, and an American slaver might safely pass through an English squadron with her cargo on deck, if no doubt existed as to her nationality. It is only when the stars and stripes are supposed to be fraudulently hoisted that the cruiser can pretend to visit a vessel which is suspected to be Spanish or Portuguese, as well as to be engaged in the slave trade."*

*"If it is true that several American vessels have been stopped on this ground of suspicion, it cannot be denied that a series of offensive mistakes may require explanation, and possibly redress. GEN. CASS seems to be justified in saying that the case is analogous to the arrest of a suspected criminal by a policeman, who is personally responsible in case of error. If instances of false imprisonment occurred in rapid succession, a further question would probably arise as to the good faith or discretion of the officers; and it is barely possible that the commanders of the English cruisers may, in their indignation against the American slavers, have misunderstood the extent of their powers; but neither Lord MALMESBURY nor Admiral STEWART will venture to justify or support any attempt to claim for England the invidious right of exercising a general maritime police."*

*"The best excuse for the presence of the squadron off the ports of Cuba is to be found in the suggestion of the American Government that the blockade should be transferred from Africa to the West Indies; yet it might have been foreseen that the vicinity of the unpopular flag would serve as a cause of excuse for irritation in the Union. A Russian fleet in the North Sea would not put an end to all suspicion by explaining that it was engaged under some treaty in suppressing the contraband trade of the Norwegian fishermen. The police exercised by the cruisers in the gulf is partial and habitually legal, but still it is carried on in American waters, and it is a police. If it cannot be withdrawn at once, in immediate deference to menacing complaints, the present state of affairs ought to compel an early termination of the most anomalous system which ever gave gratuitous provocation to foreigners."*

*"It is peculiarly unfortunate that the anti-slavery crusade should alienate from England the portion of the American community which would otherwise be drawn nearer to us by interest and by inclination."*

Your note concludes by saying that the President will execute the treaty with "fidelity and efficiency." If by this is meant, as I suppose it is, that the usual force will be kept in commission as long as the treaty is unrepealed, it is all that can be claimed on the score of "fidelity;" but, sir, when you speak of "efficiency," I confess your meaning is not so clear. If a cruise of one or thirty

years has failed to suppress the traffic, and we have had cruisers there at least that length of time, I am at a loss to understand how our mere apology for a navy, which, instead of protecting our flag in our own waters, is signalized by the "*grave errors*" committed in Nicaragua, can be suddenly exalted to the dignity of "*efficiency*" on the African coast! How much better would it be if the force of 80 guns assigned to *the BRITISH service in Africa* were transferred to *the AMERICAN service in the Gulf of Mexico* to interpose their volleys when your country's flag is insulted by inflated and drunken British minions! This reflection, I am confident, has more than once aroused the wonted fires of your patriotism. Cherish it, sir, to the end of your ministerial career, and you will never have cause to regret that an unknown friend commends it to you. The officers of our navy are brave and worthy men, and, hence, are as much discouraged and disgusted as their countrymen are mortified, at their being confined to the ignoble occupation of vainly essaying to run down a few unarmed slavers, while a foe-man worthy of their steel rides with impunity over their flag in foreign ports and on their own coast.

It may be that the recall of a portion of our African squadron would be the signal for a more frequent search of American vessels in that quarter, though, as a matter of fact, I question it. But suppose it did occasion that inconvenience, it only proves the necessity of a speedy settlement of the question of search! If such considerations are to prevent the transfer of our fleets from one quarter to another at our own pleasure, then the British claim is tacitly acknowledged, and it is just as incumbent on us to keep 80 guns on the coast of Cuba *to prevent search* as on the coast of Africa. And, if this be the case, *you* might, with as much propriety, stipulate with Lord NAPIER to keep 80 guns hovering around Cuba to prevent the *landing*, or as you term it, "*entrance*" of slaves and the search of our vessels, as Mr. WEBSTER stipulated with Lord ASHBURTON for a like force to prevent the *embarkation* or "*departure*" of slaves from Africa and the search of our vessels on that coast. The object in blockading Cuba would be the same as that in blockading Africa. *We are bound by treaty to effect the one, why not the other?* The law of nations sanctions the one as much as the other. DID YOU NEVER REFLECT, SIR, THAT YOU HAVE AS CLEAR A RIGHT TO FORBID THE CUBAN PLANTER'S PURCHASING A SLAVE AS YOU HAVE TO FORBID THE AFRICAN CHIEF'S SELLING HIM? If consistency is a virtue, let me commend it, through you, to the President. In the same sentence in which he promises to continue one blockade, despite of its acknowledged failure, he declines entering "*into any new stipulations*" to carry on the other, which he admits would "*close the slave mart of the world.*" Consistency requires that the two coasts, the *termini* of the traffic, should be on the same footing, and, so far as our government is concerned, should have a police squadron of 80 guns at *both* or at *neither*. He should now either stipulate for the prevention of "*their entrance,*" or decline the further obligation to prevent "*their departure.*" The force on the African coast you acknowl-

edge to be a failure; WITHDRAW IT, SIR, AND THE PROBLEM IS SOLVED! Do this, and you reduce the buyer and the seller to a just footing, while our navy can be employed in the pursuit of higher and nobler ends. Our merchant vessels also will be entitled to the same immunities upon every sea, and not have to rely upon the questionable efficiency of a convoy of 80 guns on the sickliest and most dangerous coast in the world.

I do not blame you for refusing to stipulate further with the British government; I only affirm that in so doing our policy in 1858 is different from what it was in 1842. The change is an improvement, and, it is to be hoped, is a step towards a settlement of the question of search. As to the efficiency of our navy to suppress the slave trade, I confess entire indifference, in this connection. Illicit traffic always has and will exist, and the end must be that either the law or the traffic falls into disuse, according as the one or the other is wrong or inexpedient. Most social evils work their own cure, and frequently do so soonest when left to themselves. The slave trade, if such an evil, is no exception. As a permanent thing, municipal law can effect but little either for its suppression or promotion. If, by such laws merely, it is checked at one point it will appear at another, and if abolished in one form it will be established in another, as the Cooly and Apprentice systems fully attest. Cupidity and servitude are co-existent with humanity! Labor, whatever its name or *status*, can always be bought with money. The traffic, then, which nations have so long been vainly seeking to suppress, *if right*, will never be permanently abolished by human law; and, *if wrong*, would perhaps come to a suicidal end as soon by being let alone as by any other means. The generation which forbade it has not long passed away; no one can predict what another may do. Fifty years comprise but a short period in a people's history. Time and experience are required either to confirm or to change the policy of great nations. Ours is yet in its infancy, and, as you can testify, has hardly yet fallen upon a settled policy of its own. But, sir, be these things as they may, the search of our vessels is a different proposition. It is a usurpation, an infringement of a national right, and, as persisted in by the British government, is a deliberate insult to the country. You are in a position to effect much in the settlement of the issue. After exacting ample satisfaction for past offenses, it is your duty to require security and exemption for the future.

I presume it were needless for me to remind you of the object in view when our Government declared the slave trade piracy, but I question if it is generally understood throughout the country. A single resolution of the House of Representatives (1823) explains it:

*Resolved*, That the President be requested to enter upon and prosecute, from time to time, such negotiations with the several maritime powers of Europe and America as he may deem expedient for the effectual abolition of the slave trade, and its ultimate denunciation as piracy under the laws of nations, by the consent of the civilized world.

The President, in compliance with the request, submitted the



proposition to Russia, the Netherlands, France, Spain, Portugal, Colombia, and Buenos Ayres; but none of them came into the measure, and the object was frustrated. But negotiations were then, and had for some time previously, been pending with the British Government, and one of the conditions which hastened the treaty negotiated by Mr. RUSH, and signed at London on the 13th March, 1824, was, as expressed by JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, Secretary of State, in his instructions to our minister, that "the British Government should agree to treat upon this subject, *on the basis* of a legislative prohibition of the slave trade by both parties, under the penalties of piracy." This condition met the "unhesitating consent" of the British Plenipotentiaries, as Mr. RUSH informs us, "*provided* we could arrive at a common mind on all the other parts of the plan proposed;" prominent among which was a mutual right of search. Well, sir, this concession of the right of search *was* incorporated in the treaty, and, within a few days after it was signed, *Parliament complied with the conditions laid down by our Government* by passing an act which punishes slave trading with death, without benefit of clergy, and loss of lands, goods and chattels, as pirates, felons and robbers upon the seas ought to suffer. Down to this point everything went on smoothly; but judge of the chagrin of the British government, when, after faithfully complying with *our* condition, the American Senate refused to consent to *theirs*, and would not ratify the treaty. A feeling of resentment naturally sprang up, and England conceived she had been jockeyed out of her right to search for the newly-made pirates. Negotiations were again opened when Mr. CLAY was Secretary of State, but the right of search was again refused in spite of the piracy act of Parliament. This is the origin of the British claim, on the ground of the traffic's being *piracy*. And, sir, upon reflection, you will find that if it is without force it is at least plausible.

A pirate is "*hostis humanæ generis*," and all who are declared to be such by a formal act of government are expatriated; for a pirate is without country. But all national vessels have a right to capture pirates; and when the fact that the United States have declared a certain description of their citizens to be pirates is coupled with the notorious fact, that the American flag is the one under which the alleged piracy is committed, the temptation to search our vessels is indeed sore, and it seems difficult to deny to all nations a right to search for the pirates, without being amenable to the charge of encouraging piracy.

I, therefore, submit to your judgment whether, seeing the object of declaring the traffic piracy has *not* been and will not be attained, that it is *not* piracy under the law of nations, it would not be better to *repeal the piracy act and let things revert to their former condition when the British cruisers had no pretext to search for pirates!* Such repeal need not in any way serve to revive the slave-trade in this country. It is here prohibited by more than

one statute; and as to other countries, the least we have to do with their affairs, the better will we attend to our own.

I know, sir, it is not for *you* to repeal this piracy act, but it is for you, and every other American citizen, to weigh it in one scale and the inconveniences growing out of it in the other. Nor is it your province to abrogate the eighth article of the treaty of WASHINGTON. But since you have, from the first, opposed it, *upon grounds which experience has proved to be just and solid*, it lies, perhaps, more in your power than any other man in America, to correct the great error then committed, and forever settle the question of search. *Did you ever enquire why five years was the period agreed upon for the first trial of the experiment?* If so, let me ask you to ascertain, from the official sources at your command, what it has cost the country in "life and treasure" during the last fifteen years, and then inform the people whether it has been an economical or a costly evasion of an issue which is now further from adjustment than it was when Lord ASHBURTON finished his labors among us.

A word in conclusion. You may safely rely upon it, THE QUESTION OF SEARCH WILL NEVER BE SETTLED WHILE THE PIRACY ACT AND THE 8TH ARTICLE OF THE TREATY OF WASHINGTON REMAIN UNREPEALED. Have you, then, the resolution and courage to *urge the Administration to lop off these unmeaning excrescences and save the country from the embarrassments they entail?* Do this, sir, and if your efforts are crowned with success, the cheering reflection of your declining years will be, that in your country's cause you have not lived in vain.

### ERRATA.

Page 10, line 20 from bottom, for "or best exists," &c., read  
"or *at* best exists," &c.

Page 20, line 1, for "our sources" read *other* sources."

Page 20, line 15 from bottom, for "devil" read "*devils*."

Page 27, line 17 from bottom, for "largest average" read  
"largest *annual* average."

Page 42, line 16 from bottom, for "*La Seine Imperieure*," read  
"*La Seine Inferieure*."

Page 42, line 21, omit "cts."

Page 45, line 6, for "slaves" read "*slave*."





